

Syria awaits President Clinton

DAMASCUS (AP) — While Jordan and Israel were signing a peace treaty, hundreds of workers planted flowers and painted the curbs Wednesday as part of Syria's grand welcome for President Bill Clinton. Mr. Clinton's visit on Thursday, the day after he watched Jordan and Israel put an official end to 46 years of war, will be the first trip to Damascus by a U.S. president in 20 years. It has been welcomed by the state-run media as a new opportunity for progress in negotiations with Israel. But despite the new peace slogans that keep popping up around the capital, Syria has made it clear it wants a different kind of agreement than the one concluded by Jordan and Israel. President Hafez Al Assad has criticised Wednesday's treaty. "We want a withdrawal from the Golan Heights. This is what the Syrian president wants," said Ismael Bilal, who works for the Syrian Communist Party. Wednesday's government-run newspapers carried front-page previews of the Jordanian-Israeli treaty ceremony, but the editorials, which reflect government policy, concentrated on Mr. Clinton (see page 12).

Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published by the Jordan Press Foundation
جوردان تايمز يومية مستقلة تصدر عن المؤسسة الصحفية الأردنية «الراي»

Israel, Arabs agree on Aqaba project

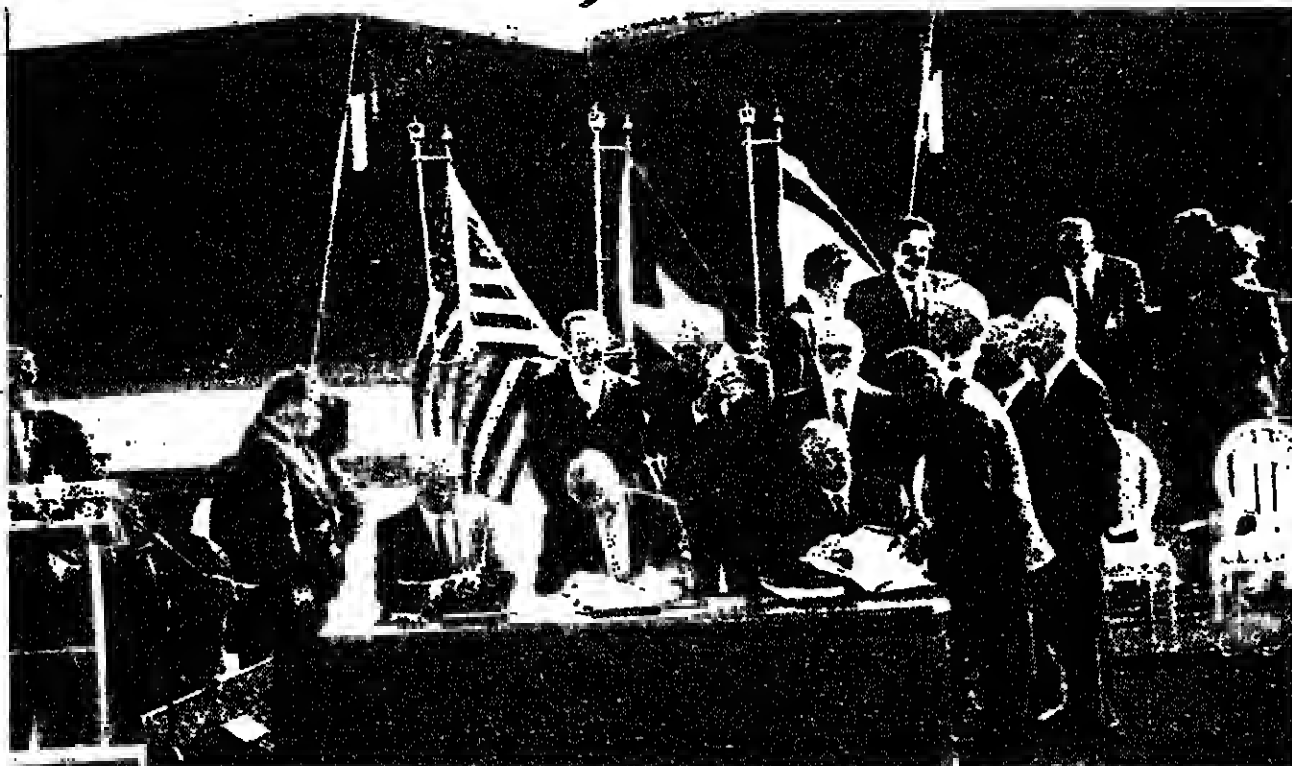
MANAMA (AFP) — Israel, Arab and other states agreed on joint environmental projects for the Middle East on the last day of multilateral talks here Wednesday, delegates said. However, an Israeli proposal for a summit meeting to discuss desertification was rejected by "certain Arab delegates," said Japanese delegation head Toshinori Shige. Jordanian delegate Zahar Al Mahanna said earlier the Israeli proposal had met with "Arab reservations." The Saudi delegation also rejected a call from Israeli Environment Minister Yossi Sarid to join a clean-up of the Gulf of Aqaba, which Israel is planning with Egypt and Jordan. Riyadh believes that regional projects including Israel "should not precede a just and comprehensive peace settlement" between Arabs and Israelis, a Saudi delegate said. Despite the Saudi reservations, the Gulf of Aqaba project was approved by other delegations, the Gulf of Aqaba project was approved by other delegations, the Gulf of Aqaba project was approved by other delegations. It involves setting up three anti-pollution centres in the ports of Aqaba in Jordan, Eilat in Israel and Nuwaibeh in Egypt. Work will begin in 1996 at a cost of \$6 to \$7 million provided by Japan, the European Union and Israel.

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Jordan, Israel seal historic accord



Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and U.S. President Bill Clinton sign the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty on Wednesday after Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin as His Majesty King Hussein, Israeli President Ezer Weizman (to the King's left), His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher and other Jordanian and Israeli, Russian and American dignitaries look on. At left is Israel's chief negotiator with Jordan Eliakim Rubinstein and next to Dr. Majali is the Kingdom's chief negotiator Faysal Tarawneh.



His Majesty King Hussein and other leaders attending Wednesday's signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty pose for a group photograph. (From left to right) U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak

Rabin, U.S. President Bill Clinton, His Majesty King Hussein, Israeli President Ezer Weizman, Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev, Israeli Foreign Minister Shimon Peres and Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali

Treaty of peace is signed with U.S. president as witness

King: It is a day like no other ... It is peace with dignity and commitment

Rabin to King: I have learned to know and admire your quiet, smiling power

Clinton to His Majesty: This is your day

Peres: 'Let us dream together, we've licence'

From Ayman Al Safadi in Aqaba

JORDAN AND Israel on Wednesday signed a historic peace treaty that officially ended over four decades of war between them amidst assertions from leaders of the two states that the new era will be one of cooperation, mutual respect and tolerance.

The agreement, which was initiated in Amman on Oct. 17, is the first to be reached between Israel and any Arab country since the launching of the peace process in Madrid in 1991.

At a site about 4.5 kilometres north of Aqaba, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and his Israeli counterpart Yitzhak Rabin signed the agreement to the applause of over 5,000 guests who attended the simply but emotional ceremony.

U.S. President Bill Clinton, whose country has co-sponsored the Arab-Israeli peace process and played a major role in bringing Jordanian and Israeli views closer, also signed the accord as a witness. His Majesty King Hussein, Israeli President Ezer Weizman, His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan stood behind the two prime ministers as they opened a new chapter in the relations between the Kingdom and the Jewish state.

Mr. Clinton and First Lady Hillary Rodham Clinton headed a list of tens of Arab and foreign dignitaries who saw Jordan and Israel embrace a new era of peace in this desert location astriding the border. Other dignitaries attending the signing include German Foreign Minister Klaus Kinkel and Egyptian Foreign Minister Amr Musa.

Also attending were members of the Royal family, Cabinet members, parliamentarians and other high-ranking officials.

It is with "a sense of enormous pride, a sense of fulfillment that I stand here before you" to announce the beginning of the times of peace between Jordan and Israel, King Hussein said.

The King described Wednesday as an unusual

day, "a day like no other" in terms of the promise it holds, adding that "we will remember this day as long as we live."

The King said the peace treaty, which he said will be ratified by Parliament in "a matter of days", marks the "dawning of a new era of peace, mutual respect between all and tolerance," asserting that the peace that Jordan and Israel have reached is not peace on paper but one that will lead to mutual cooperation to build a better future for Jordanians, Israelis and others in the region.

The King said Jordan will continue to cherish all those who have fallen in the years of conflict between Jordan and Israel. "But I believe they are all with us today... as we come together to ensure that there will be no more death, no more misery, no more suspicion," as had been the case in the past.

The King spoke of the promise the peace will hold for the future in terms of quality of life, economic development and security for all.

"This great valley in which we stand will become the valley of peace," the King said, adding that by working together, Israelis and Jordanians will make it bloom as never before without a need for any to supervise the actions of the two countries.

"This is peace with dignity, this is peace with commitment," the King said. The peace will not simply be a peace on paper, he said, it will be real.

"We will never forget this day," which ended a chapter of war and opened a book of life, the King said in front of television cameras that broadcast the signing ceremony live to many parts of the world.

The King thanked President Clinton for the support the U.S. has extended towards the realisation of peace agreement, saying "we will always remember that you personally came to be with us on this most happy of occa-

sions."

In an emotional speech that spoke of the suffering the two countries had to endure through the years of conflict between them, Mr. Rabin also sounded an optimistic note about the future of the region with the attainment of peace between Jordan and Israel.

"We have known many days of sorrow, you have known many days of sorrow, but bereavement unites us, as does bravery, and we honour those who sacrificed their lives," Mr. Rabin said as Jordanians and Israelis sat next to each other watching the two countries hurry decades of war.

"The time has come not merely to dream of a better life, but to realise it," said Mr. Rabin, who added that the leaders should clear the path of peace but "the road itself must be paved by both peoples."

The Israeli prime minister said the peace agreement between Jordan and Israel would not have been reached had it not been for the existence of a desire of peace in the hearts of both peoples.

"Both nations were determined that the great revolution in the Middle East would take place in their generations," he said adding that peace between states is peace between peoples and an expression of "trust and respect."

"I have learned to know and admire the quiet and smiling power with which you guard your nation and the courage with which you lead your people," Mr. Rabin told King Hussein, adding that the peace the King and he were making was a peace between friends.

Similar praise to King Hussein's leadership came from Mr. Clinton, the first U.S. president to visit Jordan since former President Richard Nixon visited the Kingdom in 1974. Mr. Clinton pledged continued U.S. support for Jordan and Israel as they work on bringing economic development and prosperity to the area.

Mr. Clinton congratulated King Hussein for realising the vision of the late King Abdul-

lah who, he said, saw brightness when darkness prevailed in the region.

The U.S. president also said that peace is the biggest victory that Mr. Rabin, a former soldier, can offer to his people.

"Peace between Jordan and Israel is no longer a mirage, it is real" and will take root in this soil, Mr. Clinton said.

Mr. Clinton warned against what he called the forces of terror that will try to "hold you back, but we cannot, we must not, we will not let them succeed."

Here in the Rift Valley Jordan and Israel have bridged a tragic rift, Mr. Clinton said.

Pledges for support of peace between Jordan and Israel also came from Russian Foreign Minister Andrei Kozyrev who said Russia will "be with you until full peace is achieved" in the region.

Similar optimism came from U.S. and Israeli foreign ministers who saw great chances for development in the area under conditions of peace.

"Let's dream together, we have got the licence," Mr. Peres told Jordanians and Israelis who sat under the sun for hours to witness what King Hussein called a historic moment of the region.

"Peace shall make the desert alive," Mr. Peres said, echoing pledges by the King, Mr. Clinton and Mr. Rabin.

King Hussein and Mr. Rabin addressed the ceremony after they received flowers from Jordanian and Israeli girls whose grandfathers were killed in the 1967 Arab-Israeli war. President Clinton and Mr. Weizman also received flowers from the girls.

The signing ceremony took off to the tunes of the Jordanian, Israeli and American anthems. While the Jordanian Armed Forces band played the Kingdom's anthem and the Israeli band played that of Israel, the two bands together played the U.S. anthem.

Jordanian and Israeli soldiers sat next to each other as their leaders formally declared all wars over between

them.

After observing a minute of silence in honour of those who have fallen in the wars between the two countries, "those for whom this peace ceremony has come too late," verses of Koran urging peace and from the Torah were recited.

In front of the podium where Jordanian and Israeli leaders stood side by side, senior army officers from both countries, "men of arms who once pulled the trigger," shook hands and exchanged symbolic gifts.

As the national anthems of Jordan and Israel ended the ceremony, the officers saluted.

Above the Jordanian, Israeli and American flags that bedecked the signing site at the new border crossing between the former enemies, balloons in the colour of the Jordanian flag were released into the air. The wind carried these balloons towards Eilat where Israeli journalists and guests cheered.

The ceremony took place amidst strict security with soldiers manning the roads leading to the site at the edge of the desert.

But the signs of festivities that marked the site were not visible in Aqaba which had only Jordanian and American flags hoisted in its streets and a banner in front of the Coral Beach where the U.S. delegation stayed saying "we welcome peace."

The audience at the signing ceremony included 2,000 invited guests each from Jordan and Israel and more than 1,200 American officials and businessmen accompanying the president under a special arrangement drawn up by the White House in a show of support for the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement.

The Israeli audience included many members of the Knesset, which on Tuesday overwhelmingly endorsed the peace treaty, as well as opposition leaders, including former Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir, who had led his country's delegation to the international conference in Madrid in October 1991 to launch the Middle East peace process.

Clinton pledges U.S. will stand by Jordan

'We'll not let you down,' president tells Parliament, promising to meet Kingdom's defence requirements

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — U.S. President Bill Clinton on Wednesday resoundingly affirmed his country's support for Jordan and pledged that Washington would actively seek means to increase trade and economic cooperation with the Kingdom.

President Clinton, addressing a joint session of the Upper and Lower Houses of Parliament, also promised to meet Jordan's legitimate defence requirements.

Mr. Clinton, the first American president to address an Arab parliament and the first foreign head of state to appear before the Jordanian legislature, also announced a U.S. contribution of \$75 million to set up a regional investment bank to encourage American investment in projects like those envisaged in the Jordan Rift Valley. The establishment of the bank with a proposed capital of \$10 billion is expected to be discussed at next week's Middle East/North Africa economic summit to be held in Casablanca, Morocco.

The U.S. President, who witnessed the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty in the Wadi Araba desert earlier in the day, declared: "those who take risks for peace must not stand alone. We will work with Jordan to meet your legitimate defence requirements and give you the security you deserve."

Mr. Clinton, the eighth U.S. president that His Majesty King Hussein has dealt with, recalled that former president Dwight Eisenhower had promised the King 35 years ago that the U.S. would stand behind Jordan.

Quoting Eisenhower, President Clinton said: "Our country knows what you have done. Believe me, we won't let you down. Both of us, Jordan and America, are fighting the same battle."

"Today that is the struggle for peace," said Mr. Clinton in his 20-minute speech to the session, which was not attended by 18 deputies representing groups that oppose the peace process. "And I say again on behalf of the U.S., the U.S. will not let you down."

Often interrupted by loud applause from the packed galleries of the domed parliament house in the heart of Amman, President Clinton paid tribute to King Hussein, who attended the parliament address, for sending "a signal to the entire Arab world that peace is unstoppable... and meeting the challenge of history and advancing the cause of peace throughout the Arab World."

Addressing the people of Jordan, Mr. Clinton, who flew to Aqaba from Cairo early Wednesday to attend the signing ceremony, said: "The U.S. admires and supports the choice you have made and we will stand with you in the months and years ahead."

The president, who was spending the night in Amman before flying on to Damascus for talks with Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in a bid to break the logjam in the Syrian-Israeli track of negotiations, also paid tribute to the democratisation of Jordan.

"...in the midst of hard times and conflict, you are building a society devoted to the growth of pluralism and openness," he said and referred to the Kingdom's hosting of refugees.

"You have established a parliament where all voices could be heard... your nation's commitment to pluralism has been matched by a remarkable generosity of spirit, you have opened your door to millions of your Arab brethren and they have come here year after year seeking refuge in your nation and they have found a true home."

Addressing the gathering, which included Her Majesty Queen Noor, many members of the Royal family and U.S. first Lady Hillary Clinton, President Clinton noted that peace could not stand long without "tangible improvement of the quality of ordinary citizens' lives."

"If poverty persists then the purveyors of fear will find fertile ground," he said.

"The U.S. understands the need to produce real benefits and we are taking steps to meet that goal," he said, noting that his administration was writing off all of Jordan's government debts to the U.S. and had encouraged the Kingdom's other creditors to do the same.

In the same context, the president noted that the Jordanian-American-Israeli committee was working on investments to develop energy, water and tourism projects in the Jordan Valley.

The U.S. will also consider other measures, including a bilateral investment treaty with Jordan, he said.

Turning to extremism in the region often painted in the West as part of Islam, the president said the United States respects Islam "as one of the great religions in this cradle of civilisations."

"There are those who insist that between America and

(Continued on page 7)



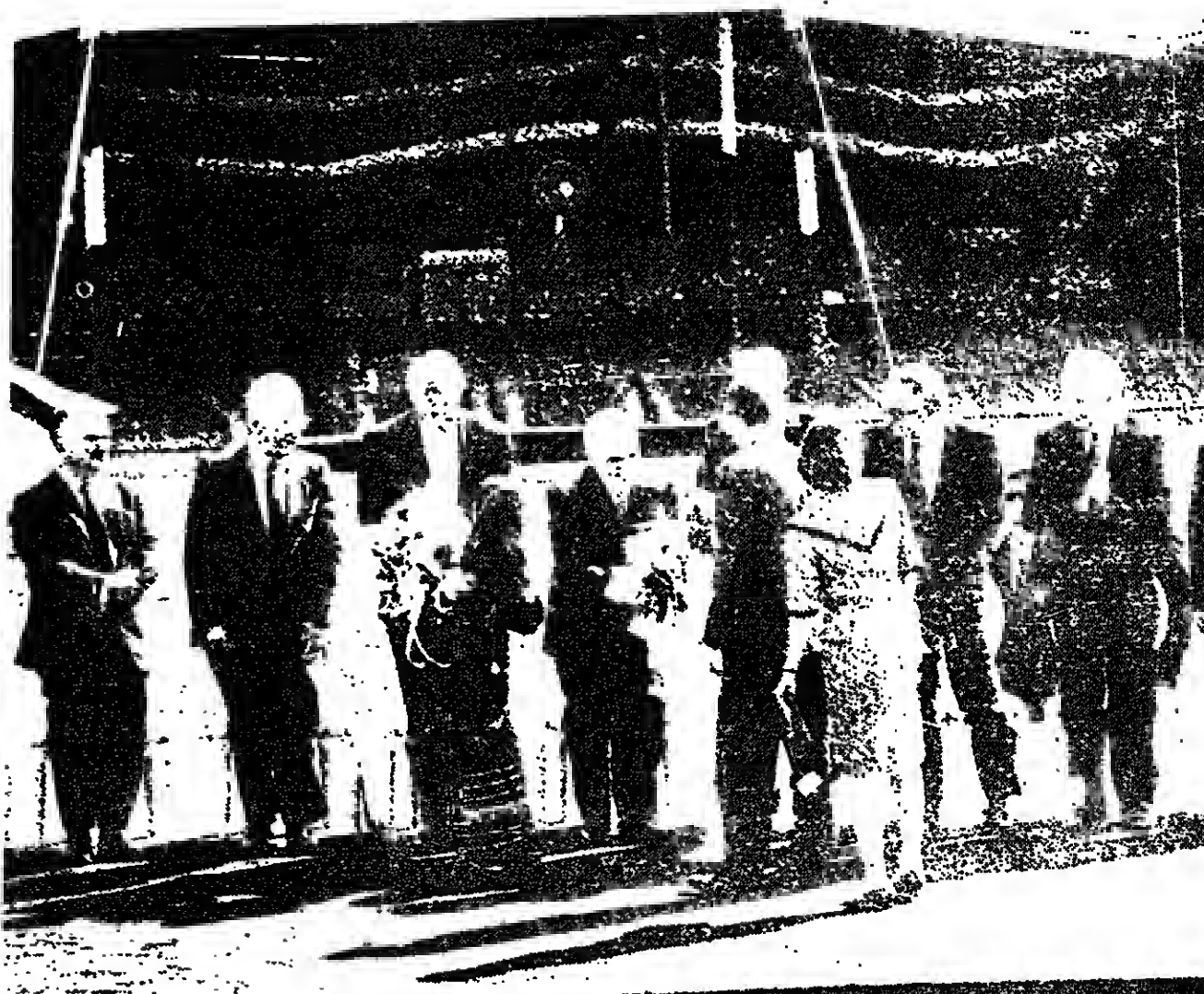
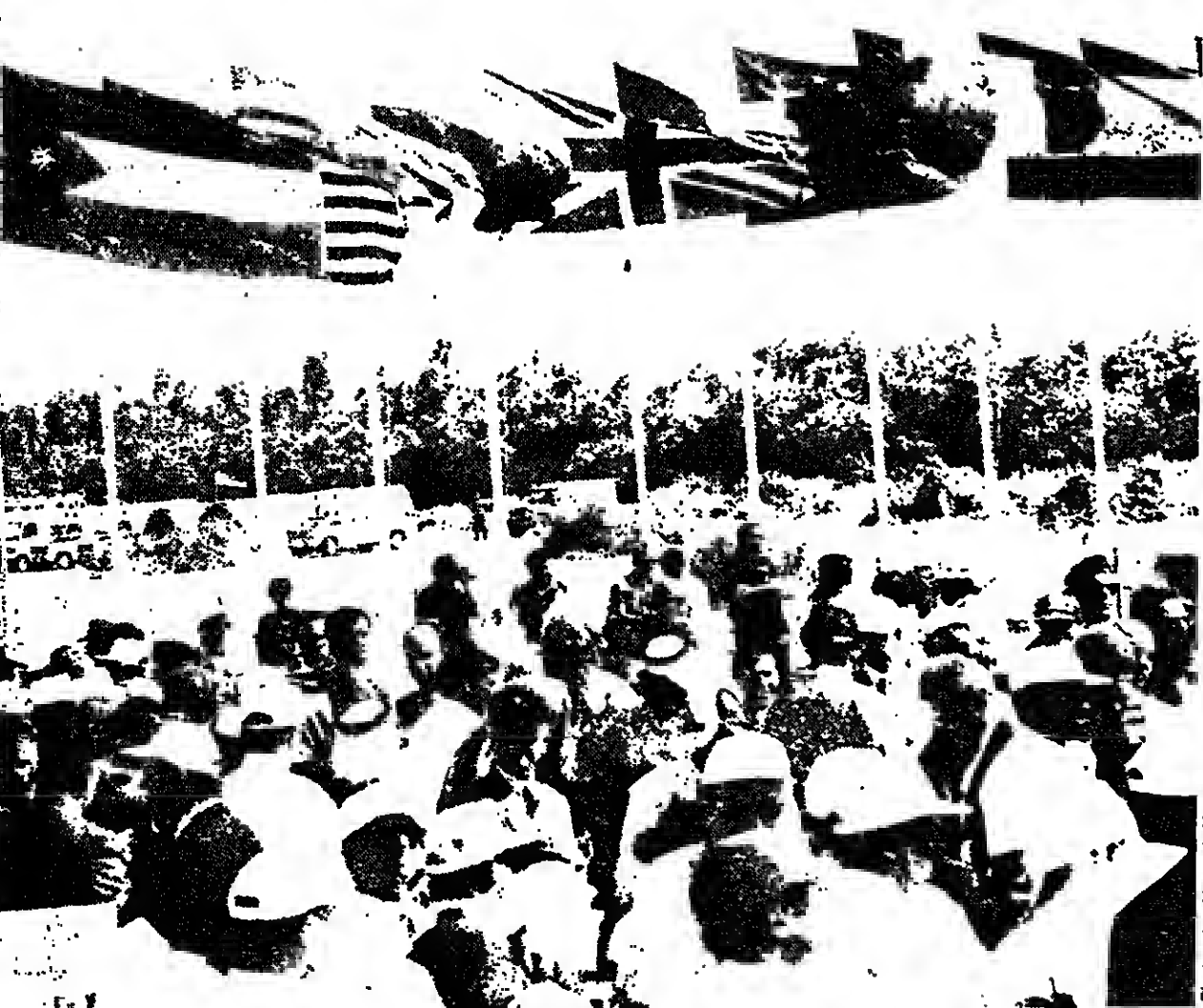
Beginnings of peace

Clockwise, His Majesty King Hussein Wednesday presents Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin with a gift following the signing of the peace treaty between their countries.

Jordan's Hiba Smadi, whose grandfather was killed in the 1967 war, presents U.S. President Bill Clinton with a bouquet of flowers, while Israel's Lea Lotan, whose grandfather also was killed in the 1967 war, presents His Majesty King Hussein with a bouquet of flowers at Wednesday's signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel.

Flags of the countries attending the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel on Wednesday.

Her Majesty Queen Noor, the wife of U.S. President Bill Clinton, Mrs. Hillary Rodham Clinton (left), the wife of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, Mrs. Leah Rabin (second right), and the wife of Israeli President Ezer Weizman Wednesday move to take their seats at the signing ceremony of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel.



WHAT'S GOING ON CONCERT

Concert by "Manfred String Quartet" at the Royal Cultural Centre on Thursday at 8:00 p.m.

FILM

Film entitled "Dawn of the Dead" at the American Centre on Thursday at 5:00 p.m. (126 minutes) (No one under seventeen will be admitted).

PLAY

Play for children (in Arabic) entitled Hakaya Abu Al Ajah (Strange stories) at the Royal Cultural Centre at 5:00 p.m.

SEMINAR

Seminar in Arabic entitled "The Effect of Diabetes on Skin" by Dr. Youssef Al Daman at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel on Thursday at 4:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

First exhibition of "musical" books and publications at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Exhibition of textiles artist and patchwork by Tuulikki Ekdal at the Gallery located at the Jordan Inter-Continental Hotel.

Two exhibitions: Paintings by Italian painter Armando Appia, and a special exhibition of "Polluted City — the Monuments" at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Art exhibition by Ahmad Subaih at Baladna Art Gallery.

Exhibition of art by Sanaa Hindi entitled "Leaves" at Dallah Art Gallery.

Exhibition entitled "Spanish Modern Engraving and Sculpture" at the Jordan National Gallery, Jabel Luweibdeh (Tel. 630128).

The First Computer Art Exhibition in the Arab World at Aln Art Gallery.

NMC to present piano, string quartet concerts

By Jean-Claude Elias
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The National Music Conservatory (NMC) — Noor Al Hussein Foundation was able to reschedule two attractive music programmes during one of the country's most eventful weeks.

Tonight (Thursday), NMC, in cooperation with the French Cultural Centre in Amman, will feature the celebrated Manfred String Quartet.

In addition to works by French composers like Ravel and Debussy, the ensemble will perform Schumann's quartet in A major. The "Manfred" is Marie Bereau, violin, Luigi Vecchioni, violin, Alain Pelissier, alto and Christian Wolff, cello.

The quartet has produced remarkable recordings of contemporary pieces by Schoenberg, Prokofiev and Janacek.

This event will also take place at the Royal Cultural Centre.



Antonio Sardi de Letto at the keyboard

On Saturday, and in cooperation with the Italian Embassy in Jordan, pianist Antonio Sardi de Letto will give a recital of music by Rossini, Busoni, Verdi and Liszt at the Royal Cultural Centre.

Mr. de Letto's talent has already taken him to perform in 22 countries, and his name has been associated with stars like Perlemuter, Ciccolini and Philippe Entremont.

Senior American cleric attends peace treaty signing

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Rev. Dr. Joan Brown Campbell, general secretary of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC), was among a group of American religious leaders who attended Wednesday's signing of the historic peace agreement between Jordan and Israel, according to a NCC statement.

"I am glad to be a part of this delegation," she said, "because the agreement is a sign that peace has a chance."

According to the NCC, Dr. Campbell's presence continues the U.S. administration's acknowledgement of the positive role that the churches have played in fulfilling peace in the Middle East.

Dr. Campbell, who was personally invited to attend this week's ceremony by U.S. President Bill Clinton, said her participation is a witness to the churches' strong belief in continued movement toward peace and to the "legitimacy of the claims of all of the region's religious communities."

On the occasion of the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty the MECC once again "affirms the centrality of Jerusalem for all people and for the monotheistic religious communities involved."

In this regard, he said, the MECC calls upon all concerned "to help overcome Israeli exclusivist control over the city for the sake of genuine partnership between Arabs and Israelis as well as between Jews, Christians and Muslims in determining their unity in the city of peace."

that at a time when no one is under the illusion that either peace or justice presently prevail.

It said Dr. Campbell emphasises that Christians in the region and the NCC remain deeply concerned about the rights of all people in Jerusalem, including the Christian community, "rights that go well beyond access to holy places."

Meanwhile, General Secretary of the Middle East Council of Churches (MECC) Gabriel Habib said in a statement Wednesday

Associations plan protests to peace treaty

AMMAN (Combined Agencies) — Jordanian professional associations gathered here Wednesday to organise a series of demonstrations and other measures to protest against the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel.

Their meeting came as U.S. President Bill Clinton arrived at Aqaba to take part in the signing ceremony of the historic treaty which ends 46 years of hostilities between Israel and Jordan.

"We are planning a march after noon prayers on Friday in Zarka, and another one Sunday from the Al-Hussein Mosque to Al-Hasbimieh Royal Palace," said trade union member Abdallah Hammoud.

Mr. Hammoud made the remarks to reporters as he went into a meeting of the professional associations which group around 70,000 members.

It was not immediately clear if the 12 professional associations were to join the protest.

Kamal Nasser, head of the Jordan Bar Association (JBA), said association members were also examining plans to hold political rallies in Amman and Irbid.

The head of the Jordanian Medical Association (JMA) Ishaq Maraga dismissed the treaty with Israel and Jordan signed at the Wadi Araba

border post as "superficial." But he stressed that opponents of the treaty would use "democratic means not violence" to fight back.

Dr. Maraga charged that the treaty has failed to contribute to a comprehensive peace settlement in the Middle East because "they (the Israelis) are not intending to give their rights to the Palestinians who are at the core of the problem."

Britain signals change in European defence debate

LONDON (R) — Britain, long opposed to the idea of developing independent European defence structures outside NATO, has signalled a major change in attitude that could open the door to a transformation in Western military cooperation.

The United States, Britain and the Netherlands had been wary that setting up new defence arrangements could undermine the position of U.S.-led NATO. France, Belgium and others have long favoured a bigger role for Europe in defence issues.

Recent months have seen a change of heart in Washington and the Hague. Now even Britain, in many ways the most hardline defender of trans-Atlantic ties, is opening the door to a possible military role for the 12-nation European Union (EU).

Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, in a speech in London Monday, said Britain and France had to cooperate more on defence, as the two major military powers in Europe with seats on the U.N. Security Council and nuclear weapons.

"An effective European defence and effective insti-

tutions to underpin it require both our countries... to build on the substantial cooperation we already have," Mr. Hurd said.

France and Britain, traditional opponents in the debate on European defences, hold a summit meeting next month and are expected to announce plans for a joint air command to protect and transport troops in peacekeeping and humanitarian missions.

British government officials said that while London still believed that European defence should be linked firmly to the NATO alliance, there was now room to give a greater role to institutions like the Western European Union defence group.

"There's more to come," said one senior official, who asked not to be identified. "The game is changing very fast and we would be foolish to camp on an old position. We should be open to a new debate."

The European Union is building a common foreign and security policy under the terms of the Maastricht Treaty. But the treaty is vague about the prospect of com-

mon defences, although it earmarks the nine-nation WEU as Europe's future defence arm.

The defence issue will be up for debate when EU member states start a major review of Maastricht in 1996.

France and Germany, who have set up a European Army Corps since joined by Spain, Belgium and Luxembourg, are expected to make fresh proposals on defence before 1996.

WEU foreign and defence ministers also meet next month in the Netherlands to consider the question.

Diplomats say several factors have combined to give fresh impetus to the debate.

Firstly, U.S. President Bill Clinton has endorsed the idea of a greater European role, reversing the suspicions of previous U.S. administrations, because he wants the allies to shoulder more of the burden in an age of shrinking defence budgets.

NATO is now working on a plan that would allow it to lend key military assets to organisations like the Western European Union (WEU) in crises where the United States was not involved.

This new flexibility — and the involvement of NATO in crises beyond its borders such as Bosnia — has also reduced traditional French mistrust of the 16-nation alliance.

France withdrew from NATO's military structure in 1966, complaining about U.S. domination of European security affairs. It remained a political member.

However, Paris signalled a new approach last month when Defence Minister Francois Leotard attended a meeting of his NATO counterparts in Spain. It was the first time France had taken part in such a meeting since 1966.

Dutch Defence Minister Hans Van Mierlo said earlier this week that the Western European Union should be integrated within the EU as its defence arm "to build a European defence pillar, next to a U.S. defence pillar."

During a visit to Paris, he said: "I see some leeway in the formerly unmovable French position, and the British position is changing too, that should make it possible."

Cambodian troops mop up in Kampot; still no sign of Western hostages

PHUM PONG TEK, Cambodia (AFP) — Cambodian government troops combed the jungle around the fallen Khmer Rouge stronghold at Phnom Vour Wednesday, but there was no sign of the three Western hostages who had been held there.

General Seng Sareun, commanding operations on the western side of Vine Mountain, said he did not know the whereabouts of the three tourists seized on July 26 when their train was ambushed in southern Kampot province.

"News about the foreign hostages depends on (Khmer Rouge commander) Paet. If Paet defects, he will be able to tell all about them," Seng Sareun said.

The general said all Khmer Rouge camps had fallen by Tuesday, Commander Paet, who had managed to escape with some bodyguards, his

wife and children, was now surrounded in a narrow strip of hillside jungle, he added.

Commander Paet's wife and bodyguards had a meeting before noon Wednesday with government officers in the jungle to discuss Commander Paet's possible surrender, the general said.

There was no immediate word on the outcome of the talks.

By Wednesday morning, 254 Khmer Rouge — 59 men, 70 women and 88 children — had surrendered with their weapons, and more were turning themselves in as the day continued, General Prum Saveoun said.

"Phnom Vour is completely under our control," he said. "I think it's the end of the Khmer Rouge in Phnom Vour." He commanded operations on the east and south of the mountain.

Two Khmer Rouge guerril-

las who said they defected Tuesday indicated they had not seen the Western hostages for more than a month.

"The foreigners were not with Paet when the government overran his camp, and I don't know where they are, I have not seen them for more than a month, since the government forces began their assault," Lin Son, 39, said.

There has been no reliable report on the fate of Australian David Wilson, 29, British Mark Slater, 28, and Frenchman Jean-Michel Braquet, 27, since a defector said last week they had been seen, alive but thin, a month earlier.

The train ambush came only three months after the Khmer Rouge captured — and later killed — two young British travellers and an Australian, also in southern Cambodia.



U.S. Admiral Richard C. Macke (centre), commander of U.S. forces in Asia-Pacific, looks at what a joint U.S.-Vietnamese team recovered at an MIA search site he visited in the northern province of Quang Ninh. A U.S. Navy F4 crashed at the site in 1972 (AFP photo)

U.S. Pacific commander military sees cooperation with Vietnam

HANOI (AFP) — The United States Armed Forces could cooperate with their former enemies in Vietnam once political and economic links between the two countries advance, the U.S. Pacific commander said Wednesday.

Security cooperation could be a possibility in the future, Admiral Richard Macke said after talks with Vietnamese leaders including Prime Minister Vo Van Kiet that touched on issues such as disputed territory in the South China Sea.

Asked at a news conference if he could force a return to Vietnam by U.S. forces, the commander-in-chief of the U.S. Pacific Command said he would not rule it out, as U.S. forces cooperated widely with other countries in the region.

"I think once the rest of the political and economic cooperation is advanced, then military-to-military cooperation could advance," he said.

Adm. Macke said he had not discussed the issue of Cam Ranh Bay, a massive former U.S. naval base later used by the Soviet Union, but added: "I'm a naval officer and naval officers are always looking for a good port."

"I firmly believe that the economic growth of this region is based on a foundation

of stability and much of that stability has been brought about by bilateral relationships that the United States has made with South East Asian nations," Adm. Macke said.

The admiral refused to speculate on whether the U.S. would speed up the glacial pace of its rapprochement with its once bitter enemies in Hanoi, despite characterising Vietnamese cooperation in the hunt for missing U.S. servicemen as "tremendous."

Continued unilateral moves by the Vietnamese on MIA's were critical for further action on cooperation at a political and economic level," he said.

"Vietnamese and Americans are working shoulder to shoulder to resolve this," Adm. Macke said of the issue of servicemen still considered missing in action, nearly 20 years after the end of the Vietnam War.

Efforts to account for the 2,238 MIAs have dominated relations between Hanoi and Washington, which eased in February when President Bill Clinton lifted a trade embargo.

But Congress and veterans groups have kept MIAs at the top of agenda in the development of relations. The two countries are due to exchange liaison offices before the end of the year in the first step

toward full diplomatic relations.

Adm. Macke toured two warplane crash sites Wednesday, praising local villagers and U.S. servicemen carrying out an excavation on a hillside in Quang Ninh province, near the port of Haiphong that was one of the most heavily bombed targets in northern Vietnam.

Around 140 Vietnamese passed buckets of earth along human chains down a steep limestone ridge where a U.S. Navy F-4 jet with two crew on board crashed in 1972, scattering debris over a wide area.

He later flew to an area where a B-52 bomber crashed after being shot down during a raid on Hanoi during the Christmas bombings of 1972. One of the crew of six was listed as missing, three others were held prisoner, while the remains of two others were returned in 1988.

Adm. Macke, a former U.S. Navy pilot who flew more than 150 missions over Indochina, said he was "extremely impressed" by the painstaking work carried out to find bone and teeth fragments that can be used to identify MIAs.

Adm. Macke left Vietnam later Wednesday for Laos and Cambodia to visit U.S. forces searching for MIAs in those countries.

Big U.S. states fall to Republicans

CLEVELAND (AFP) — All the attention in the upcoming vote has been on who will win control of Congress, but Republicans are gaining in the governors races in key states which could spell trouble for the White House.

Voters in 26 states will choose a chief executive on Nov. 8, and Republicans are running tight races against Democratic incumbents in several of them, including California, Florida, New York, and Texas.

President Bill Clinton knows he needs allies in those big states come the 1996 presidential elections, and he campaigned over the weekend in California for Kathleen Brown, who is trailing Republican Governor Pete Wilson.

Mr. Clinton also went to the mat earlier this month for New York Governor Mario Cuomo, who is fending off a strong challenge from Republican state senator George Pataki.

"I was asked to come in there because it was a difficult case and because I think he's an important leader for our country," Mr. Clinton said in a radio interview Monday in Cleveland, Ohio at the end of a three-day campaign tour.

But the president's backing may be a liability in the anti-Washington climate which has put the Democrats in the hot seat.

Indeed, the only sitting Republican governor facing a serious challenge is Arizona's Fife Symington who is having legal troubles over his role in a failed savings and loan.

Republican gains in the state elections could turn the traditional pre-vote anti-incumbency sentiments against the party in the 1996 presidential race, but states are key fundraising machines.

LONDON (R) — Plans to reform the United Nations to reflect a changing world have run into trouble and could be blocked by disagreement over who joins the Security Council, U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Ghali has warned.

The debate goes to the heart of who wields power in the United Nations, now involved in almost every world crisis and with much greater responsibility in areas like peacekeeping.

During a visit to London Tuesday, Dr. Ghali said he had hoped the issue of adding new members to the core Council of the United Nations would be resolved in time for the world body's 50th anniversary next year.

"Unfortunately, it seems the discussions will continue," he told British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) Radio.

"There is a consensus about... adding new seats but there is no consensus about who has to participate in the Security Council as permanent members."

Several countries are pressing for seats at the U.N.'s top table, including Japan, Ger-

3 held after Taiwan fire kills 13

TAIPEI (AFP) — Police arrested Wednesday the owner and two employees of an illegal karaoke club in Taipei after a fire swept through the building killing 13 people and injuring one seriously.

The club manager and his deputy director were released on 200,000 Taiwan dollars (\$7,692) bail each, but police detained the owner for alleged manslaughter and endangering public safety.

"We have sent the club owner Chueh Tzu-Chiang to the Taipei Prosecutor's Office, pending formal charges," a police officer said.

The fire broke out at 9:10 p.m. (1300 GMT) Tuesday on the second floor of the four-storey Snapperstar Diamond Karaoke Club in Taipei, and lasted two hours, he said.

The 37-year-old owner was not at the club during the blaze, police said, but added that Mr. Chueh was running the club without a licence and had made illegal alterations that had blocked the fire escape.

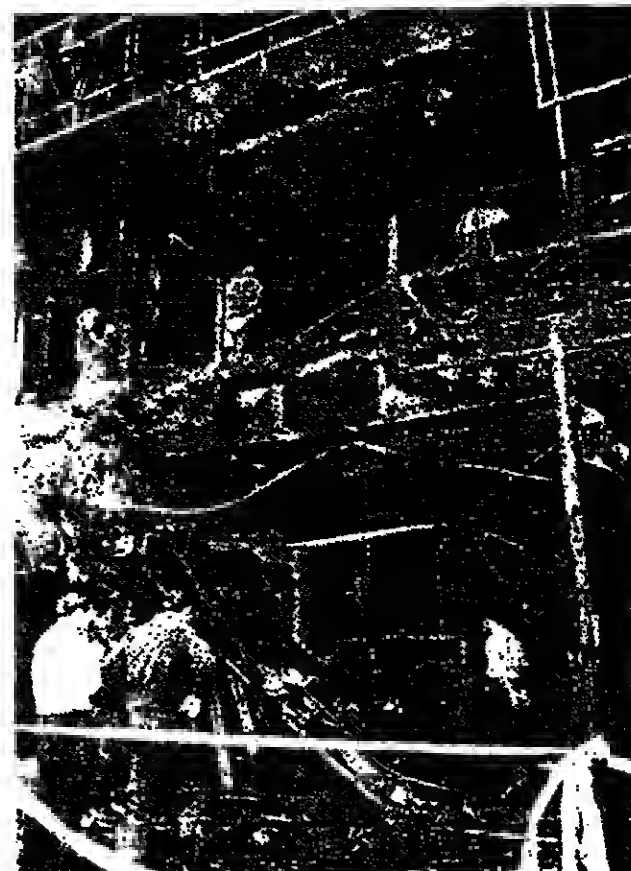
They said that when the fire started, the manager Chung Chia-Ming and deputy Shih Chia-Shun did not call the police or help evacuate customers from the club, thereby contributing to the deaths of 13 people.

By the time the fire was eventually extinguished, the entire structure had been burned to the ground, police said.

More than 80 people, including about 50 customers, were inside the club when the inferno took hold, police said, adding all the dead were found on the third floor.

The sole survivor from the third floor, 19-year-old Huang Yu-Fu, jumped from the building and was taken to hospital emergency with serious burns and fractured bones.

Preliminary investigation showed that the fire was caused by overheated wiring in the club's electric signboard installed on the second



Plainclothed police investigate the gutted four-storey Snapperstar Diamond karaoke bar as they try to determine the cause of the blaze which killed 13 people and seriously injured one (AFP photo)

floor of the building, police said.

But police said they could not rule out arson.

Firemen said they only received the call for help after the fire had been burning for at least 10 minutes. "It was already too late since the fire had spread everywhere," Chen Fa-Sheng, chief of the Taipei Fire Police Department, said.

The club was adorned with easily inflammable decorations made of plastic and wooden plans, Chief Chen noted.

The karaoke and restaurant club was actually registered as a food company in 1992, said Hsieh Mu-Chou, director of the Construction Administration Department of the Taipei City Govern-

ment, adding that the owner had been fined many times for illegal use of the building.

Taipei Mayor Huang Ta-Chou, who is standing for reelection at the end of the year, promised speedy action to protect the lives and property of the public and crack-down on illegal businesses such as karaoke parlours, sauna houses and piano bars, where fires have frequently been reported.

Taiwan now has 294 legal karaoke clubs, but the number of illegal establishments is estimated at between 600 and 1,000.

A total of 235 people have been killed in major fires at karaoke bars, restaurant and illegal massage parlours in Taiwan over the past four years.

U.S. missile security lax — report

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. hand-held missiles like the Stinger are vulnerable to theft because of lax security and poor record-keeping by the military, a congressional report said Tuesday.

The report by the General Accounting Office (GAO), the Congressional Investigating Agency, said its review of Stinger, Redeye and Dragon Category I missile inventories differed from military records by thousands of weapons.

The Stinger and Redeye missiles can shoot down aircraft and the Dragon can pierce armour.

The report took on added significance as President Bill Clinton began a three-day trip to the Middle East. There has long been concern

that some U.S. missiles given to anti-Communist Afghan rebels may have found their way to groups in the Middle East that are enemies of Israel and the United States.

"The poor oversight and record-keeping of Category I missiles lead us to conclude that these missiles have been and remain vulnerable to theft or other undetected losses," the GAO said in its report.

The Defence Department agreed there were problems with its records but added: "There have been no confirmed thefts or unexplained losses of Category I missiles."

That did not satisfy Senator John Glenn who said in a

statement, "it would be disastrous if a crate, or truckload, of these deadly missiles, were to fall into the hands of a terrorist organisation. Yet, because of Defence Department has not kept good track of these missiles, that is a very realistic scenario."

The GAO said many of the inventory problems came after the 1991 Gulf War when thousands of missiles that were shipped to the Gulf region were returned to U.S. bases.

The army reported that all 6,373 Stinger missiles it sent to the Gulf were returned. But the GAO said a comparison of missile serial numbers found 40 of the missiles could not be accounted for.

Thailand reshuffles cabinet

BANGKOK (R) — Business tycoon Thaksin Shinawatra became Thai Foreign Minister and a former bank president was given the transport portfolio Wednesday in a cabinet reshuffle sharply contested by some outgoing ministers.

State-run Radio Thailand announced the 14 changes, most of them to minor deputy ministerial jobs, after King Bhumibol Adulyadej approved the list submitted by Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai Monday night.

Apart from Thaksin, former Bangkok Bank President Vichit Sriraphongchai joined the government as transport and communications minister, and Palang Dharma (Moral Force) Party leader Chamlong Srimuang became a deputy prime minister.

Mr. Chuan has said the change in the government's line-up will not affect its policies of promoting economic growth, social justice and greater regional cooperation.

Under Mr. Chuan's present coalition government,

member parties are allocated a certain number of portfolios and party leaders can replace their representatives in the cabinet at will.

Two of the five parties in the coalition recommended changes, with the three other parties making no changes. Mr. Thaksin and Mr. Vichit from outside parliament has stirred strong criticism, not only from the ministers they were replacing, and threatened to deepen divisions within his party.

U.N. blocked over Security Council reform

many and India.

The question is who should be taken on to reflect the new realities of the post-cold war world, particularly from Asia and Africa where many critics accuse the United Nations of being little more than a club run by a few rich and powerful states.

The Security Council currently has five permanent members, chosen in 1945 as the victorious allies in World War II, who hold a veto and exercise a decisive influence on any action.

The permanent members are the United States, Russia, China, Britain and France. All come from the northern hemisphere and all have insisted that any reforms must not dilute their power of veto.

Although there are 10 other members of the Security Council, they have no veto. U.N. members take turns to occupy these seats in rotation, each serving two years.

Most of the world's poor and developing regions are not represented among the core permanent membership, including Africa, Latin America and Asia, apart

from China. Countries from these regions say their interests must be taken into account.

But fierce regional rivalries and competition threaten to block any reforms, which have to be approved by two-thirds of the 184 member nations.

"The problem is who among the Asian countries? India? Then you have the problem of Pakistan, Indonesia? Africa is divided between 30 member states," Dr. Ghali said.

"It may block the whole reform project."

Even if membership is expanded, adding too many new nations to the Security Council would make it unwieldy.

Dr. Ghali told reporters Monday that he did not believe the total Security Council membership including permanent and non-permanent members should be expanded beyond 17 or 18 members from its current total of 15.

members won't give up their power. But if you take in Japan and Germany, which can obviously contribute financially, you then have too many Europeans and no chance of adding further Asian states."

The result, diplomats say, is that the status quo will probably remain for several years in the absence of a deal. A U.N. committee working on the issue failed to reach agreement last month, after more than 20 meetings.

This would please medium-sized powers such as Britain and France who are currently able to "punch above their weight" by wielding major influence at the United Nations.

For many others, it is a question of balance since the U.N. — which had 51 members when it was founded and now has 184 — is supposed to represent the interests of all.

Muslim countries, for example, have complained that while the Security Council was quick to respond to the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and protect oil interests, similar tough action to protect Bosnia's Muslims has not been forthcoming.

Brazil hijackers steal \$1m in amazon gold

BRASILIA (R) — Brazilian hijackers seized an airliner on the Amazon frontier, forced it to land and left with \$1.15 million in gold, police said.

Five men took over the Tabata Transporte Aereo jet late Saturday 15 minutes after takeoff from Itaituba, a gold-mining town 1,000 miles (1,600 km) northwest of Brasilia in Para state, Itaituba Police Chief Major Raimundo Magno said. "They pulled out shotguns and revolvers and forced the pilot to turn around. They said no one should be scared because it was a robbery and they didn't want to hurt anyone," Maj. Magno said. The De Havilland Dash 8 bound for the city of Belem with 33 passengers, landed at Itaituba with its lights off. The plane was carrying 213 pounds (97 kg) of gold bars bound for Sao Paulo and the men unloaded them from the plane, loaded them on waiting vehicles and fled. The airport had its telephone lines cut during the takeover and the pilot said the hijackers had a good technical knowledge of planes. No one was injured. Authorities have estimated the gold is worth the equivalent of \$1.15 million. Maj. Magno said about 60 officers were working on the case but had no leads.

Crossbow robber gets tripped up

OSAKA, Japan (R) — A robber armed with a crossbow, axe, stun gun, smoke grenade, can of mace and wearing a grey wig was in jail Tuesday after tripping over his own feet. Police said the thief was so laden down with equipment, plus a stolen metal box full of money, that he tripped during his getaway from the crime at Osaka's main railway station. The thief had fired a rubber-tipped arrow from his crossbow at three bank employees as they carried 120 million yen (\$1.2 million) in three boxes from a travel agent's office to a bank branch at the station. Startled by the unusual attack, one employee dropped his "box of money, which the thief snatched and made off with. But after running less than 100 metres, the thief tripped over his own feet and was seized by a passerby. "I just heard someone shout 'thief' and I ran after him," Etsuro Nakajima said. "Then he fell over so I jumped on top of him." A bank employee struck in the chest by the arrow was slightly injured in the robbery.

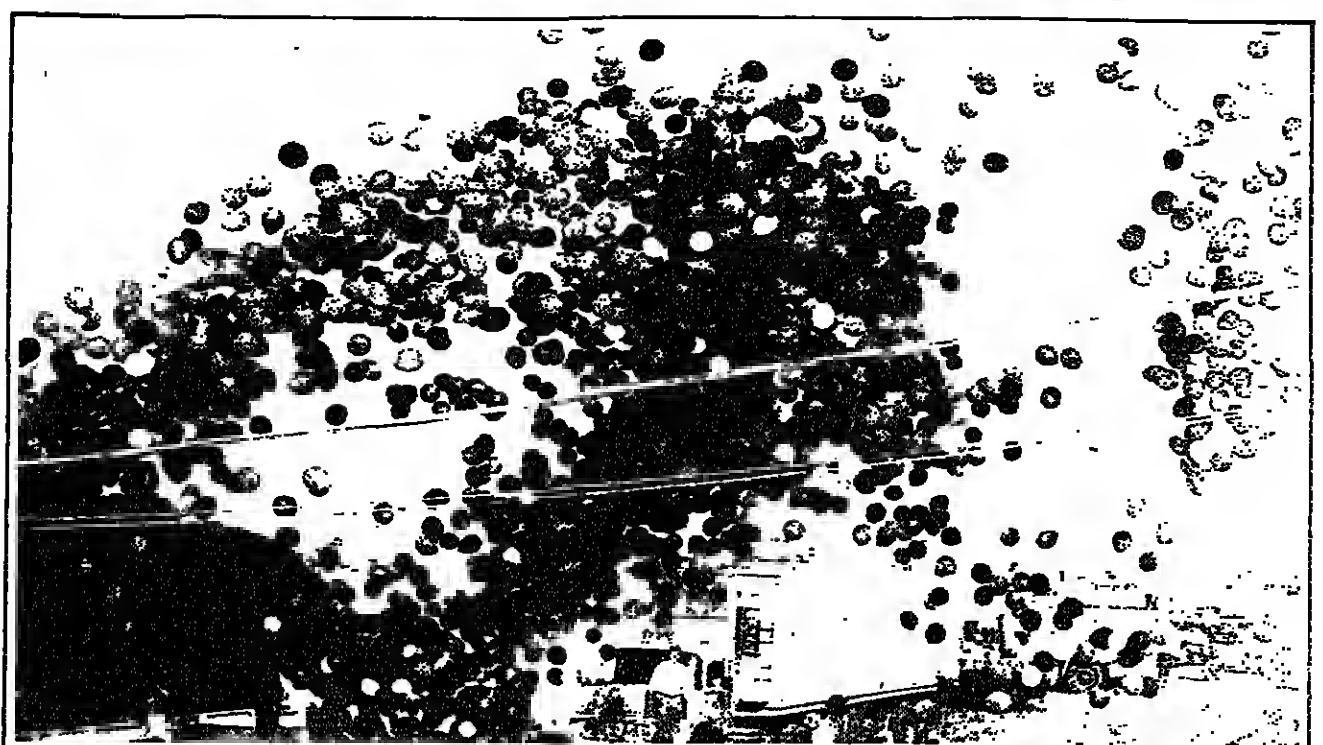
New book reveals indecisive Clinton

WASHINGTON (AFP) — A new book on President Bill Clinton's first 18 months in office chronicles several flip-flops on Bosnia and other foreign policy issues, the Washington Post said Sunday. On The Edge: The Clinton Presidency, by veteran political writer Elizabeth Drew also reveals that aides convinced Mr. Clinton to stop discussing policy while dressed in jogging gear because it looked un presidential. Mr. Drew writes that in 1993 Mr. Clinton was tempted to back away from his push for an end to the arms embargo against Muslim Bosnians, even as Secretary of State Warren Christopher travelled to Europe to lobby for the plan. Mr. Clinton convened a meeting of his top military strategists at the Oval Office to discuss a book he was reading on the long history of civil war in the Balkans which prompted him to reconsider whether American efforts could succeed in such a troubled land. Ms. Drew quoted former Secretary of Defence Les Aspin as telling officials following the meeting with Mr. Clinton: "Guys, he's going south on this policy. His heart isn't in it." The book concludes that lack of planning during the transition was responsible for many of the messy public episodes that marred the first months of the presidency. Unlike Republican administrations which walked into the White House with detailed plans, the Clinton team put only a two-week agenda down on paper and found themselves overwhelmed by the controversy over gays in the military and foul-ups in selecting an attorney general. The Post quoted administration officials as saying Ms. Drew's account was outdated and that Mr. Clinton has since gained confidence in conducting foreign policy, in particular since Leon Panetta was appointed chief of staff.

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A SIGN OF PEACE: A Jordanian and an Israeli soldier from the two countries' army orchestras share a joke during rehearsals at the Wadi Araba border crossing where the peace signing ceremony was held Wednesday between Israel and Jordan (AFP photo)



THE COLOURS OF PEACE: Balloons sporting the colours of the Jordanian and Israeli flags are released into the skies over Wadi Araba in a final salute to the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty signing ceremony Wednesday (photo by Youssef Al Allan)

Cyanide capsule found near Sri Lanka blast scene

COLOMBO (R) — Sri Lanka's police chief said on Wednesday a cyanide capsule was found at the scene of the bombing which killed the opposition leader and 53 others but refused to speculate on who might have triggered the blast.

"It is too early to say who is responsible. We are working on all angles including the possibility that the Tamil rebels were responsible," Inspector-General of Police Frank Silva, who announced the higher death toll, told a news conference.

Mr. Silva said a small cyanide capsule was found far away from the stage, where opposition leader Ganiya Dissanayake had just finished speaking when the bomb packed with ball bearings exploded just after midnight Sunday.

Tamil rebels carry cyanide capsules and swallow them in the event of capture or certain death.

Other senior police officers have said Tamil rebels are the prime suspects for the suicide bombing at a campaign rally in a Colombo suburb.

Hundreds of minority Tamils were fleeing Colombo for the northern rebel stronghold of Jaffna for fear of a mass roundup of Tamils in the capital, according to residents of the northern town of Vavuniya.

Police have released a picture of the crowd taken by a photographer later killed in the blast, saying it may help identify a female suspected Tamil guerrilla whom many officers believe triggered the bomb.

The state-run Daily News Wednesday carried another picture of the woman's head, which was found at the site.

Mr. Dissanayake's widow Srma will contest the Nov. 9



Srma Dissanayake

presidential election in his place, standing against a woman also widowed by political violence.

After a stormy meeting Tuesday night the opposition United National Party (UNP) picked her to run against Prime Minister Chandrika Bandaranaike Kumaratunga.

Srma Dissanayake was selected over ex-premier Ranil Wickremasinghe in the hope of a sympathy vote, party sources said. "She is our only hope of winning," a senior party official said.

The Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) have been fighting since 1983 for a Tamil homeland in the north and east. They deny responsibility for the blast.

The government postponed peace talks with the rebels due to have restarted last Monday and imposed a state of emergency. An inde-

finite curfew has been reduced to a nightly one.

Deputy Defence Minister Anuraadha Ratwatte said the curfew was imposed following clashes between supporters of rival parties outside Colombo soon after the bombing.

"There were government and opposition supporters clashing and some scurrilous anti-government posters coming up. Trouble was brewing outside which could have led to communal clashes," he told the news conference at which Mr. Silva spoke.

The government is worried that public grief could turn into attacks by the majority Sinhalese against Tamils.

Mr. Ratwatte turned down demands by Mr. Dissanayake's family to lift the curfew to enable mourners to pay their respects.

"If the government does not lift the curfew tonight we'll break it with masses of supporters," said Wickrema Weerasooriya, a close Dissanayake aide and his brother-in-law, earlier Wednesday. "We're ready to get remanded."

Another leading UNP member said the bombing was a conspiracy between the government and the Tamil rebels.

"In my view it was a conspiracy between the government and the LTTE," former speaker M.H. Mohammad told a news conference.

Mr. Mohammad said the rebels wanted the new People's Alliance government to win the presidential poll because it had been taking a soft line on security in advance of the peace talks.

Mrs. Srma Dissanayake, a 50-year-old lawyer with three children, is an elected member of the Central Provincial Council but has no national political experience. Both Mrs. Kumaratunga and her mother, former Prime Minister Sirima Bandaranaike, also lost their husbands to assassins.

Mrs. Kumaratunga's politician husband Vijaya was killed in 1988 by leftwing rebels. Mrs. Bandaranaike became prime minister after her husband and Kumaratunga's father, Prime Minister Solomon Dias Bandaranaike, was shot dead by a Buddhist monk in 1959.

In a compromise move the UNP appointed Mr. Wickremasinghe as party leader after the November poll.

Dingiri Banda Wijetunga of the UNP is state president until the poll. But the UNP lost its parliamentary grip on power after 17 years in August's general election.

Bosnians capture key Serb position

SARAJEVO (R) — Bosnian government forces have captured a Serb barracks believed to have been used as a firing position by gunners shelling the northwestern town of Bihac. United Nations officials said Wednesday.

The United Nations also accused the Bosnian Serbs of "maliciously interfering" in U.N. operations by denying requests to allow fuel convoys to pass through Serb-held territory.

In Belgrade, international mediators Lord Owen and Thorvald Stoltenberg met Serbian President Slobodan Milosevic in an attempt to boost the flagging peace process.

Government controlled Sarajevo Radio said the Bosnian army had "liberated" 150 square kilometres near Bihac over the past two days, a claim not confirmed by the U.N. and which, if true, would represent a severe setback for the Serbs.

U.N. military spokesman Colonel Tim Spicer confirmed that the Muslim-led Bosnian army had captured a barracks on the Grabez Plateau east of Bihac city and said he expected the Bosnian Serb Army to try and take it back.

"I'm quite clear they've taken the barracks. (One would expect a BSA (Bosnian Serb Army) counterattack," said Col. Spicer.

The barracks overlooks Bihac, which has been shelled on almost a daily basis for most of the last 30 months of war.

The United Nations believed the Bosnians were trying to take more high ground in the Grabez area, but there was no guarantee that they would even hold what they had taken so far.

Bihac town and its surrounding enclave in northwestern Bosnia have been surrounded by Serbs since the early days of the war. The Muslim Fifth Corps recently succeeded in suppressing a revolt by a breakaway Muslim faction in the enclave and has since turned its attention to the Serbs.

Other Bosnian units were also reported moving up towards the town of Gradacac to reinforce military activities in northern Bosnia, the U.N. said.

Diplomatic sources said Lord Owen and Mr. Stoltenberg would go on to Zagreb Thursday to meet Croatian President Franjo Tudjman after their talks in Belgrade with Mr. Milosevic.

The co-mediators of the international conference on former Yugoslavia oversee a team of 130 observers checking that rump Yugoslavia has stopped military and non-humanitarian aid to Bosnian Serbs.

Belgrade said in late August that it was severing all links with its former proteges after they rejected an international peace plan to end the conflict in Bosnia.

Mr. Milosevic wants the U.N. to lift economic sanctions against the rump state, comprising Serbia and Montenegro.

Mr. Tudjman said Monday that he was ready to meet Mr. Milosevic and Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic to try to restore peace in former Yugoslavia. Mr. Tudjman was responding to a proposal by French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe a week ago that the leaders of the three republics hold a summit on Balkan peace efforts.

The Bosnian Serbs have responded to the cut-off of supplies from Belgrade by blocking United Nations fuel convoys, bringing U.N. operations virtually to a halt in parts of eastern Bosnia.

U.N. spokesman Thant Myint-U said only 53 tonnes of fuel were delivered to Sarajevo and Muslim enclaves in eastern Bosnia Tuesday, a fraction of the amount needed, and requests

for more convoys to be allowed to pass had been submitted to Bosnian Serb authorities.

"If the clearance request for today are not approved we can only be certain that the Bosnian Serb authorities at the highest level are set on a policy of maliciously interfering with all aspects of our work in this country," Mr. Tudjman said.

The main U.N. relief agency said it had managed to bring 40 truckloads of aid into Sarajevo Tuesday, in addition to the daily airlift, which brought food stocks up to one month's supply.

But spokesman Peter Kessler accused the Serbs of hindering efforts to bring winter shelter and clothing supplies into the capital.

Meanwhile the commander of U.N. forces in Bosnia, Lieutenant-General Sir Michael Rose, said Wednesday he would not abandon his post in the war-torn country before his mandate is up in January, despite demands for his removal from Bosnian political parties.

All eight political factions in the Bosnian parliament Tuesday said they wanted Gen. Rose removed as U.N. commander, charging him with bias after he ordered government troops out of a demilitarized zone overlooking Sarajevo.

They said they wanted an "impartial" peacekeeping chief and "not a general who protects the interests of his government."

The Bosnian ambassador

to the United Nations, Muhammad Sacirbey, also criticised Gen. Rose in an interview with BBC Wednesday, saying he used "intimidation" methods towards the Bosnian government while "cajoling" the Bosnian Serbs.

Mr. Sacirbey also charged that Gen. Rose demonstrated a "lack of sensitivity to the situation of the people of Sarajevo."

But in an interview with BBC Radio, the British general said: "I don't believe that this sort of rhetoric will affect me in one way or another."

"As long as I continue to apply the U.N. policy correctly I will go on having the full support" of U.N. envoy for Bosnia Yasushi Akashi and U.N. Secretary General Boutros Ghali.

Gen. Rose said there was still holdover from "the old Communist way of thinking among the political leaders on both sides" in Bosnia and "some of them believe that if you are not with them you are against them."

Dr. Ghali said Tuesday he fully backed Gen. Rose despite calls for his dismissal. "I have full confidence in General (Sir Michael) Rose. I just want to express my gratitude to him. He has done wonderful work," Dr. Ghali told the BBC in a radio interview.

French UNPROFOR soldiers keep under cover on the front line on Mount Igman, facing Bosnian government troops who refuse to quit

the strategic zone protecting the only supply route into Sarajevo (AFP photo)

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Builder of Seoul bridge wants to build one for free

SEOUL (AFP) — South Korea's Dong-Ah Construction Co., which built the bridge that collapsed here last week and killed 32 commuters in a disaster that shook the nation, said Wednesday it would erect a new bridge for free as a gesture of atonement.

Prosecution authorities, meanwhile, arrested two more officials, including a director of the Seoul city government, on charges of manslaughter and negligence, and alleged that the suspects had covered up the precarious state of the bridge.

"We have decided to build a new, strong bridge and donate it to the country," Choi Won-Suk, president of Dong-Ah, the country's largest construction firm, announced at a press conference.

Although no evidence has been presented to incriminate the company in the collapse, Mr. Choi said he was taking "moral responsibility," as the builder.

The new bridge will cost Dong-Ah some 150 billion won (\$187.5 million), he said. In addition, the company will earmark another 10 billion won (\$12.5 million) for maintenance of the structure.

At least 32 people, nine of them girls on the way to school, were killed when a section of the 15-year-old, mile-long Sungsoo Bridge collapsed during the morning rush hour Friday.

Cars and a bus careened off the bridge, which was used by tens of thousands of commuters daily, into the Han River, which bisects the capital.

The collapse prompted an angry President Kim Young Sam to fire the mayor of Seoul, apologise to the nation and order safety checks of bridges, tunnels and apartment blocks nationwide.

Five city bridge maintenance officials were arrested soon after the collapse on charges of negligence, and six others are under investigation.

The press conference held by Mr. Choi came hours after the state-run Korea Broadcasting System (KBS) radio said the company might risk losing its licence if investigators found the collapsed bridge was the result of substandard construction.

Dong-Ah is currently involved in negotiations for hundreds of millions of dollars in overseas contracts. It

has also secured one of the world's largest contracts — Libya's \$5.5-billion man-made River Project.

In a related development, Seoul cancelled a planned international mayors' conference and a festival to mark the 600th anniversary of the capital because of the tragedy, a spokesman said.

City Hall notified the mayors of 12 cities, including Moscow, Tokyo and Ankara, that it had called off the six-day conference because officials were too busy coping with the aftermath of the bridge disaster.

The vice-mayors of Paris and Beijing were to have attended the conference, scheduled for Oct. 31 to coincide with the 600th anniversary of the South Korean capital.

Mr. Fayed also fought back, issuing a statement denying he had authorised an intermediary to meet Mr. Major and accusing the prime minister of trying to draw attention away from the sleaze allegations.

The row broke into the open last week when a newspaper alleged Mr. Hamilton and Junior Northern Ireland Minister Tim Smith were paid in the 1980's to ask questions in parliament on Mr. Fayed's behalf over his battle for control of Harrods.

Mr. Smith promptly resigned but Mr. Hamilton tried to banter on.

Aides to Mr. Major were tight-lipped Wednesday about key questions still left open, such as what were the new allegations against Mr. Hamilton.

British government battles to end sleaze row

LONDON (R) — Prime Minister John Major's government, rocked by the sacking of a minister after allegations of influence-peddling, fought Wednesday to put an end to a damaging row over political sleaze.

But its chances of shelving the row looked slim as pressure mounted on major to reveal more details about the allegations which led to junior trade minister Neil Hamilton's departure.

Questions were also being raised about the role of Mohammad Al Fayed, owner of London's up-market Harrods store, after Mr. Major revealed that prosecutors were studying his account of a meeting he had with someone claiming to be an intermediary of Mr. Fayed.

Trying to contain the allegations that have badly

hurt a government already at record lows in opinion polls after an unbroken 15 years in office, Mr. Major Tuesday announced a high-powered review of standards in public life.

Opposition Labour leader Tony Blair, in a damaging criticism taken up by newspapers, accused Mr. Major in parliament of making decisions on the run as he scrambled to take control of events.

But Cabinet Minister David Hunt, a close Major ally, said Tuesday's announcement of the review, to be headed by a high court judge, showed the prime minister's long-standing commitment to high standards in public life.

"He now wants to draw an end to the allegations, he has cleared the air, it is up to others to respond," Mr. Hunt

told BBC Radio.

In dramatic scenes in parliament Tuesday, Mr. Major said he had ordered an inquiry a month ago into allegations from Mr. Fayed that lawmakers had been paid by a lobbyist to ask parliamentary questions on behalf of the Harrods chief and it had cleared Mr. Hamilton.

But Mr. Major said new allegations were made after the probe was finished. In a letter to Mr. Hamilton, Mr. Major said the effect of the allegations, even though they were unsubstantiated, meant he could not continue as a minister.

Mr. Hamilton himself went bitterly, blaming a "media witch-burn" for his fate and defiantly promising to clear his name, raising the prospect of further damaging public

revelations.

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U.N.: All systems go for Mozambique election

MAPUTO (R) — U.N. monitors Wednesday declared all systems go for Mozambique's first multi-party elections, despite allegations of irregularities and fears of violence.

U.N. special envoy Aldo Ajello, who has been overseeing peace accords which halted 16 years of war in the impoverished southern African country, said he expected voting to go ahead as planned on Thursday and Friday.

"It seems the conditions are there for the elections to start tomorrow," he told a news conference.

Final results are expected by the middle of November in the election — effectively a contest between Frelimo, the former Marxist party in power since independence from Portugal in 1975, and Renamo, the rebel which transformed itself into a political party when fighting ended two years ago.

Referring to Renamo accusations of irregularities favouring Mr. Ajello said he wanted to see proof.

"We have, as often happens in an electoral process, some nervousness and some

accusations of mistakes and fraud," he said.

Mr. Ajello said several arms had been discovered in the run-up to the elections.

But he said U.N. peacekeepers had learned from mistakes in another former Portuguese colony, Angola, which plunged into renewed war two years ago when UNITA rebels rejected their electoral defeat.

"We have taken our measures," he said, without elaborating.

About 2,400 international electoral observers and 7,000 U.N. peacekeepers were taking up positions across the southern African country, including remote areas where infrastructure was devastated by the war which killed tens of thousands.

The presidential and parliamentary vote involves 12 candidates and 14 parties or coalitions — but the election is expected to be a two-horse race between former foes.

President Joaquim Chissano is tipped to win, with Frelimo likely to gain a large chunk of the 250-seat parliament.

Mr. Chissano has denied

allegations by Renamo and its leader Afonso Dhlakama of attempted vote-rigging.

Renamo said Tuesday irregularities included instructions from Jose Muchine, director-general of the technical secretariat for electoral administration, to polling stations to accept voter registration cards, even if they were not completely in order.

Another complaint alleged an excessive number of voter registration cards had been printed, on the basis of an estimated 8.3 million voters. Only 6.4 million people actually registered to vote.

But Dhlakama pledged Tuesday not to resume fighting if he loses the elections.

"We will use dialogue. No more war," Mr. Dhlakama said in the Zimbabwean capital Harare after more than two hours of talks with Zimbabwean President Robert Mugabe and Botswana's leader Ketumile Masire.

"We will insist to have other solutions. We will insist that the elections be held again," he said, when asked what Renamo would do if it considered the polls were not

free and fair.

Eleven southern African leaders meeting in Zimbabwe Tuesday declared they were ready to take "appropriate and timely action," including possible military intervention, to keep peace in Mozambique during and after the elections.

The leaders, ending a one-day summit in Zimbabwe, said "fundamental conditions," for staging free and fair elections in Mozambique Thursday and Friday had been achieved and that they would support whichever party or candidates won the polls.

"The summit resolved to continue to monitor the situation in Mozambique and to be ready to take appropriate and timely action if the situation so demands," they said in a communique.

The communique gave no details. Zimbabwe's Foreign Minister Nathan Shamuyarira, who was also summit spokesman, was asked by Reuters if this meant the group would consider intervening militarily. He replied: "Yes."

Jordan Times

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:

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Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

Jordan Press Foundation,

University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephones: 667171/6, 670141-4

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

Facsimile: 696183

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Historic day of peace

YESTERDAY'S signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel marks the beginning of a new era of peace and hope and an end to decades of hostility and confrontation.

Ever since the start of the Arab-Israeli conflict, His Majesty the King and the people of Jordan have endorsed every Arab resolution concerning it. We went as far as putting our own national interests on the line, not once but several times. Joining the war of 1967 that cost us the West Bank and East Jerusalem was nothing but an expression of Arab solidarity with the Arab national decision to wage defensive war against Israel even when the looming confrontation was obviously going to be disastrous. Toeing the Arab line continued to be the mainstay of Jordanian policy of the Palestinian question and the overall Arab-Israeli conflict. When the Arab countries most concerned with the Middle East problem decided to join the peace process and participated in the Madrid peace conference three years ago, Jordan was also there ready to shoulder not only its own responsibilities but also those affecting our brothers in the West Bank and Gaza. When the peace process ended up divided into separate tracks, Jordan also went along with this approach even though the Jordanian bargaining stature was among the weakest at the beginning of the peace negotiations.

The Jordanian record on suing for peace in the area therefore speaks for itself.

Still there are those among us and outside of the country who oppose the treaty. There are elements within not only parliament but also within other sectors of society who will be out of sync with the majority today.

All outbursts against the peace treaty, however, cannot mar the achievement made. Rather, expressions against the treaty will only enrich our political process as they remain peaceful and orderly. We said it before and we will say it again: All Jordanians have an inalienable right to express their views on a matter that will affect their lives and future for generations to come. On balance, though, the treaty is acceptable and appears to be equitable and fair. While the treaty bestows legitimacy on Israel, it also restores Jordanian territorial and water rights which had been denied us for so long. We might agree with those who say the text of the treaty is not perfect and there are issues that could have been settled differently. Still when taken altogether we find the treaty balanced to a considerable extent. And it is no small achievement to have President Bill Clinton present to witness the signature and to put the weight of his country behind it. We welcome Mr. Clinton's enforcement of everything that was done and we appreciate his supportive efforts to advance peace not only for Jordan but for all other parties concerned.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

WITH THE signing of the peace treaty a new chapter in the history of Jordan is opened to usher in an era of peace and stability in the region, said Al Dastour daily Wednesday. As King Hussein said in an address to the military, a new dawn is breaking in this region, marked with security and stability, noted the paper. The years of conflict and hostility, it said, have obstructed the peoples of the region's efforts towards construction and towards achieving prosperity. After long and arduous negotiations, the Jordanians have been able to regain their lost land and water and through patience and perseverance they have been able to fulfill their aspirations, said the paper.

THE PRESENCE of U.S. President Bill Clinton in Jordan is a source of pride for the country and its people because the visit reflects Jordan's importance in the region, said Fahd Fanek, a columnist in Al Ra'i daily. But, he said, Mr. Clinton does not enjoy the love of the people here largely due to the attitude of the U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher who has not achieved anything in his mission and who does not represent a fair and neutral mediator in the region. During his last trip to Amman, Mr. Christopher addressed a press conference inciting Arabs to tighten the noose around the Iraqi people and starve their children, recalled the writer. Furthermore, Mr. Christopher was a staunch supporter of the Israeli view that the abducted Israeli soldier was detained in Gaza — a claim that proved to be false — and so he won the hatred of the Palestinian and the other Arabs, said to the writer. He said the Jordanians admire America's cultural achievements and democratic life, but the Jordanians are continually shocked by Washington's foreign policies.

Dr. Ahmad Y. Majdoubeh

Peace: A challenge, not a threat

ONE RESERVATION or objection to the establishment of peace with Israel — which we have been hearing about virtually since the early days of the Arab-Israeli conflict, but especially since Madrid, Oslo and (most recently) Wadi Araba — is the concern over the nature of its anticipated impact on the Arabic/Islamic culture.

Put simply, the claim here is that peace with Israel poses a serious threat. Normalisation of relations and open borders, we are told, will unavoidably result in negative consequences. The "moral character" of the "successive Arab generations," and I am quoting verbatim here, and the very "entity" of the overall "Arab nation" will "suffer tremendously." Some go as far as to say that peace, which in their minds is pejoratively reduced to "normalisation" and "open borders," will bring about the "end" of the Arab World. The Arab individual as well as the culture to which he/she belongs will, as a result of unlimited exposure to Israel's corrupting "moral" and "ideological" influence, be slowly but systematically "destroyed" and "wiped out."

Unfortunately, this gloomy vision of our future (which, in my opinion, is built on a grave misconception), though held by a small segment of the Arab populace (namely, political and interest groups of sorts), does at times affect the opinions of many people quite noticeably, especially in the absence of a lively dialogue about the subject and a vigorous exchange of opinions. Even though the Arab man/woman in the street is more intelligent and perceptive than many think, his/her perception can be blurred somewhat by the persistent force of rhetoric disguised in patriotic attire. Regrettably, there is a great deal of pernicious ambiguity, distortion, ignorance and pure nonsense about the issue at hand.

On the one hand, of course, one ought not to trivialise the matter. Generally, many people in the Arab World, including those who are wholeheartedly for peace, have some anxiety and fear regarding the shape of things to come. For one thing, Israel and the Arab World have been at odds for the most part of the present century, and therefore we do not expect the air to be cleared overnight. For another, even though the Israeli government's attitude and approach have changed dramatically (in a positive way) since as recently as the days of Shamir, it still continues to be repressive, very cruel and unwise in banding unfortunate incidents: it detains and arrests young kids and tortures prisoners; it demolishes homes of individuals "suspected" of "terrorist acts," inflicting suffering on their innocent family members; and it bombs and kills civilians in southern Lebanon — all in flagrant violation of international law. The point here is how can you reconcile, in the mind of many people on this side of the divide, the unbecoming image we have had of Israel so far with the bright image to come?

Moreover, I think we should also admit the fact that Israel is extremely different, socially and culturally, from us. Despite some parallels and crosspoints here and there, the moral values it cherishes and the ideological principles it promotes may not necessarily be what we wish to cherish and promote. In fact, we can go as far as to say that the Israeli society is, in many crucial ways, diametrically opposed to ours. For reasons which we may or may not understand, Israel has up till this point isolated itself from its neighbours and prided itself on being different and alien.

Having said all of this, however, I wish to assert nonetheless that much of the ongoing, chilling Jeremiahs and prophecies about the aftermath of the peace process is ultimately objectionable. There are many grounds on which one can quarrel with it, but the following seem to me to be the most major.

1. Most of what we hear is so general, impressionistic and hollow that it does not make much sense. I have been

listening to this kind of rhetoric all my life and I have not been able to put my hand on anything substantial or tangible. In what precise way, we should like to ask here, are the "generations" going to be "corrupted"? Why and how is the Arab "identity" going to come to an end? It seems to me there is no argument here. Most of those who believe that Israel, following normalisation of relations, will "wipe us" out of existence give us the topic sentence but forget (conveniently enough) to develop it. What is the rationale? What are the facts? Where is the evidence? We want to know. In the absence of satisfactory answers to these questions and others, we have the right to reject all these predictions and visions. Where are the studies of Israel's educational system, of Israeli society, of its culture, of its moral character and of its ideological tenets? The man in the street has not seen much in this respect. We want intelligent opinions, studies, critiques and explications, not old wives' tales.

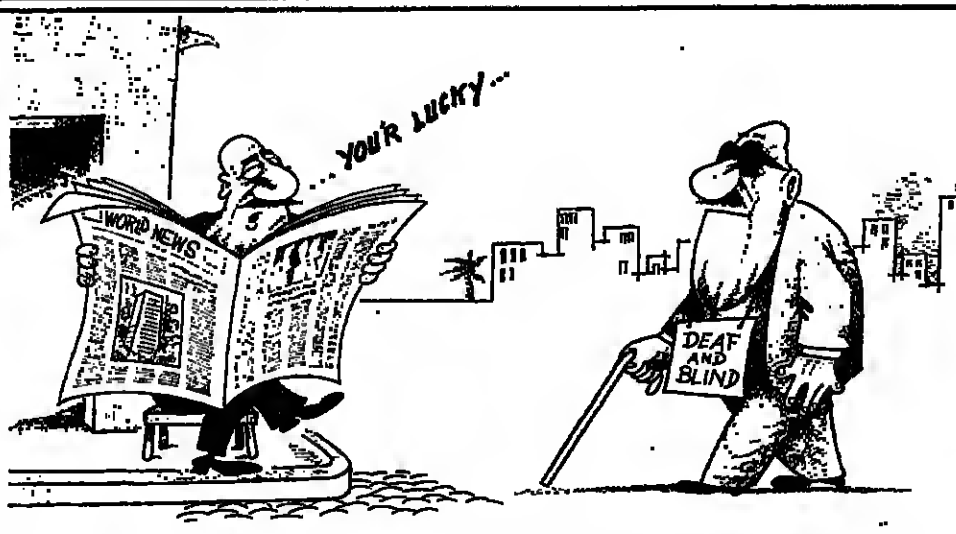
If by "moral corruption" we mean bars, whores, nude beaches and striptease and drug joints, well many neighbouring countries in the Middle East and nearby Europe have them. And we have relations with these countries and open borders.

2. Why is our opinion of ourselves so low? Are we bugs, are we worms, are we insects? Are we really so delicate, so weak, so helpless that we will be morally and ideologically brainwashed and crushed? As far as I know, we do have a culture of our own, a character of our own, a history of our own, a religion of our own. Most of the Arabs I know who go to Western and Eastern countries (countries which have bars, nude beaches and striptease and drug joints) come back very proud of their heritage, their culture, and their identity — despite whatever criticisms and disputes they may have of themselves and their society (criticisms and disputes which are, in my opinion, healthy). How is our exposure to the Israeli society and culture going to be any different from our exposure to the American, British, Romanian, and Japanese?

But if we mean that our identity at present, our moral character, our personality as Arabs is not firm and strong enough, this is an entirely different issue. I personally have been very critical of the Arab of today. I do not think he lives up to the expectations. But who is to blame? First and foremost, the Arab family, the Arab school, the Arab university, the Arab neighbourhood, the Arab society. Let's call a spade a spade. Let's not blame our faults and shortcomings on the aftermath of peace, which has not yet materialised. The best way to guard against any negative implications resulting from normalisation and open borders is, it seems to me, to do the job we are entrusted with right. Let's pay ample attention to the bringing up of our children, to their education, to their moral uprightness and to their ideological strength. If there is a bar next door, it does not mean that I have to go into it and get drunk.

3. The fact that the Israeli society is in many ways polar and diametrically opposed to ours is no reason why we should exaggerate our fear of it. In my opinion it is more positive to have a challenge than not to have one. Frankly speaking, we have been too complacent, too carefree, too self-satisfied, too secure to care. The presence of the Israeli society next to us will perhaps cause us to be less complacent, less carefree, less lazy, less mediocre. Maybe in our attempt to protect ourselves against the negative influence of the Israeli society we will define ourselves, assert ourselves, and be rightly proud of our own selves a little more than we have for sometime. Peace is not necessarily a threat; rather, it is a challenge.

Despite my own reservations and criticisms of the man in the street, I have a great deal of faith in his ability and potential to compete and excel. But perhaps he needs to be challenged to realise and affirm himself.



M. KAHIL

EU's Mediterranean drive faces obstacles

By Paul Taylor
Reuter

PARIS — Alarmed at hard-line Islamist violence sweeping North Africa, the European Union's southern members are demanding that the EU shift its focus from Eastern Europe and act to stabilise the Mediterranean basin.

France, Spain and Italy fear a flood of refugees, growing security threats and economic strains from instability racking Algeria and gnawing away at Egypt and other Arab states.

They are also concerned that with Austria, Finland, Sweden and Norway due to join in January, and a German-led drive under way to bring former communist central European states into the EU by the year 2000, the union is increasingly looking north and east rather than south.

The European Commission took up the Mediterranean challenge on Oct. 19 by proposing an economic and security pact with Middle East and North African countries that would more than double aid to modernise their economies in the next five years.

"There is a major imbalance to the detriment of the south and in favour of the east. It's time to reestablish balance," said EU De-

velopment Commissioner Manuel Marin, a Spaniard. His plan calls for spending 5.5 billion European Currency Units (ECUs) (\$7 billion) in EU aid from 1995 to 1999 and creating the world's largest free trade zone, linking up to 40 countries and 800 million citizens, by 2010.

Spain is to host a first ministerial conference of EU and Mediterranean states, plus Jordan, next year that it hopes will lay the foundations of a pact between Western Europe and its southern neighbours, most of which already have cooperation agreements with Brussels.

Diplomats and independent analysts say big obstacles lie in the way of the ambitious partnership proposed by Marin.

First, the extra money could only be taken from existing programmes for Eastern Europe or busting the EU's budget limits, both of which Germany and Britain would be certain to oppose.

In the four years to 1994, the EU spent 1.626 billion ECUs (\$2.07 billion) on the Mediterranean and 3.781 billion ECUs (\$4.82 billion) on Eastern Europe.

Second, there is little consensus on how to help the Mediterranean countries. Many economists believe increasing aid to Algeria or Egypt risks enriching a small class of profiteers or pouring money into a bottomless pit.

Free-marketters say the answer is to open EU markets to exports from eastern and south Mediterranean countries, but that would increase competition with Europe's own farm produce, so Marin's plan includes safeguards on Mediterranean agriculture.

The NATO alliance and the Western European Union, the EU's designated defence arm, have both discussed what to do about security threats from the Maghreb (Morocco, Algeria and Tunisia) and Mashrek (Libya and Egypt) area this year.

U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry said during a visit to Spain for a NATO meeting last month: "there is no doubt in my mind that NATO needs to be looking south and paying more attention to security problems on its southern flank."

He offered to share more

U.S. intelligence on North Africa with allies and said he expected NATO would in future shift the emphasis of peacekeeping and other joint military exercises from central to southern Europe.

But European and NATO officials say there is wide recognition the solutions can only be economic and not military.

Third, the Mediterranean countries have little in common economically and some are not keen to be lumped together.

The more advanced ones, such as Israel and Morocco, have relatively open market economies. But countries such as Syria and Algeria still have largely state-controlled economies built on Soviet lines, despite timid recent signs of reform.

Fourth, political differences are also bound to arise. Most of the southern Mediterranean states are not full democracies and restrict human rights.

Some, such as Morocco and Lebanon, are suspected of permitting drug trafficking on a large scale.

And then there is Libya, in diplomatic quarantine because two EU member states — Britain and France — want its nationals over the bombings of a Pan Am jumbo jet over Lockerbie.

Peres' wish to raise Jordan's GDP by 10-fold is unrealistic

By Dr. Fahd Fanek

IN HIS recent book dealing with the impact of peace in the Middle East, Shimon Peres, the Israeli foreign minister, promised the Jordanians that their per capita income will rise sharply, to reach the level of the Israeli per capita income, as one of the peace dividends. He did not say whether this objective would be achieved at once or over ten or twenty years.

Such an objective is neither realistic nor within reach. It is of course, acceptable and desirable to think positively, but I am afraid that Mr. Peres' "big" idea is blown out of proportion.

Even though the obvious goal of the book was to encourage the Jordanians to take the risk of peace, it is only wise to realise that peace could not be based on myths as this could have disappointment and frustration as the only results.

Knowing that the per capita income in Jordan for 1994 is \$1,300 and that the average in Israel is \$13,000, or ten times the share of the Jordanian individual, I wonder how peace can help Jordan increase its per capita income 10 fold at once.

Putting more value added in the Jordanian economy needs capital investment seven times what it is now. Seven is the typical incremental capital-output

ratio (ICOR). Therefore to raise the gross domestic product (GDP) in Jordan from \$5 billion to \$50 billion needs investments to the tune of \$315 billion. Where can such huge investments come from? Even if these kinds of funds were made available, the economy would still be unable to absorb them, and its ICOR will deteriorate.

If Mr. Peres' objective is meant to be achieved over 20 years, the capital needed to reach the targeted per capita income will double to \$730 billion because the population of Jordan doubles every 17 years. In this case we have to invest over \$36 billion a year, or seven times our present GDP.

If we consider inflation, as well, the investment will rise even more sharply.

Mr. Peres' idea means that Jordan's GDP should grow by 1000% in one year, or 1400% in 10 years, or 2000% in 20 years. The annual growth rate should be 16% per annum for 20 years, 30% for 10 years or 1000% in one year; an impossible task. I think.

One more point I would like to mention is that only if we are able to grow at these rates for 20 years, will we catch up with the present level of Israeli per capita income. But the Israeli per capita level will be much higher at that time.

Mr. Peres should reconsider his forecast.

Israel hopes treaty with Jordan will breach wall of Arab hostility

By Marius Schattner

near Tel Aviv, Agence France Presse

THE risks are due to the fact that Jordan has the longest border with Israel, that it is only 40 kilometres (24 miles) from occupied Jerusalem and beyond it are Iraq and Iran which are the "main strategic threat" to Israel, he said.

The agreement forbids the entry, deployment and operations of military forces from a third country in Jordan and Israel with a threatening posture to either side.

"That's a very important point for Israel which has always maintained that the arrival of Iraqi troops in Jordan would be a cause for war," Mr. Inbar said.

The accord will also lead to a softening in the position of Syria and the Palestinians "who are afraid of being left behind" in the negotiations with Israel, he predicted.

The peace treaty, initiated last Monday near Amman, is to be signed today at the border post north of the Red Sea by Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and his Jordanian counterpart Abdul Salam Majali.

King Hussein and U.S. President Bill Clinton will be present.

It will be the second treaty that an Arab country has signed with Israel, 15 years after the peace deal with Egypt.

Peace with Cairo has stayed "cold" in the absence of a solution to the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Although Israeli tourists have been flocking to Egypt, few Egyptians visit the Jewish state as long as it occupies Arab territory.

LETTERS

Courageous move

To the Editor:

I would like to seize this opportunity to congratulate His Majesty King Hussein and the people of Jordan for their courageous move to sign a peace accord with their neighbour. This is a clear indication that the King, his administration and the people of Jordan are peace loving, fair minded, courageous and independent.

His Majesty deserves a Nobel Peace prize because of his choosing peace over war at all times, freedom and fairness over repression and democracy over autocracy.

Unlike most other developing nations, Jordan is an open society where any person of any nationality can live and work in peace. Furthermore, the degree of honesty of the people of Jordan and the cleanliness of the country makes it one of the best countries in the world for tourism. Of course, these were all made possible due in part, to the pragmatic qualities of His Majesty.

Dr. Samuel Ihemdi
BS, M.D. MPH, MPA,
Natick, Massachusetts,
USA.

Weekender

Let the right people be the judges

By Mohammad Mashariqa

A portrait by local artist Marwan Al Allan displayed at a gallery in Amman last August has stirred a controversy within the Jordanian society of intellectuals and artists, and brought about the wrath of the Jordanian Islamists.

Entitled: "The script on the body," the painting created divisions among artists over its artistic value, caused Allan to be remanded in detention for two days and prompted the Islamists to file a case against the artist at a local court.

At the end of this month, Allan is to be tried on the strength of a charge that his painting represented an insult to the Islamic faith since he is alleged to have inscribed contorted Koranic verses on the naked body of a woman appearing in an abstract piece of art.

Allan claims that a government department — which he does not name — has ordered him to remove the painting from the exhibition in view of the Islamists' protests against the nature of its contents. For its part, the gallery's management has emphasised that it never exercised any pressure on the artist to remove the painting noting that since the four-day exhibition was over it was quite natural for all of the paintings to be removed, adding that there was no justification for the fuss created over its display.

Ali Shalah, an Iraqi poet in charge of the gallery, says he had given his consent to the display of the painting notwithstanding the presence of the inscriptions on it.

Had there been any misgivings, the Ministry of Culture's Secretary General Mohammad Amayreh would not have formally inaugurated the painting along with the other portraits in the exhibition, says Shalah.

Therefore it is only logical to assume that the ministry did not request an end to the exhibition and the removal of the painting, Shalah says.

Jordanian poet Ali Al Amiri's view the detention of the artist and the removal of the painting is something that should be condemned regardless of the quality of the piece of art and its contents.

Parliament Deputy Toujan Faisal has sent a note to the interior minister accusing the security services of transgressing human rights. "The detention, the investigation into the case, the insults and curses levelled against the artist," she said, "came in tacit compliance with and under the pressure of Islamic fundamentalists, launched by a group that claims to be affiliated to the Islamic faith which, through threats against the gallery caused the termination of the exhibition." In her memorandum to the minister Faisal said police should not be made judges of art and literature, noting that such practice would cause an erosion of the country's intellectual wealth.

In reaction, the artist Allan took his case to foreign news agencies and foreign radio services and later announced his intention of leaving the country for a destination where he could better present his protest to Arab and foreign circles and complain against repression of intellectuals and artists in Jordan.

AMMAN CULTURAL PULSE

A group of Jordanian intellectuals set up a team, self described as "the friends of Allan," whose aim is to organise defence of the artist at the coming trial — probably the first of its kind in the country. The team has all the reason to do so, as Allan has been charged by the public prosecutor as insulting Islam and of violating the rules of public decorum.

Local poets asked to comment on the incident and to give their views whether the verses constituted an insult to religion pointed to Ibn Arabi, the mystic poet who was alleged to have written verses interpreted as harmful to the faith, noting that nobody has ever demanded that Ibn Arabi's publications be confiscated.

Basel Rafaiah, editor in the cultural section of Al Ra'i Arabic daily newspaper said that Arab poets have been in the habit of using Koranic verses. He said that Allan did not use the verses in a skilful manner but rather, contorted them in a manner that has been misinterpreted by some people. But he added, his views stem purely from an artistic perspective and do not condone detention or trials of an artist on the grounds of misinterpretation of the



Secretary general of the Ministry of Culture, Mohammad Naji Amareh, opens the exhibition by Jordanian artist Marwan Al Allan

script.

The words inscribed on the painting roughly said: "Praised be the Lord for carrying us at night towards the body (the flesh) and taught us to pray."

"Call people to come to you and your call will be responded." "I am responding to the call of the body I intend to perform the pilgrimage to the body which extends from my soul to eternity."

An Islamic writer considered the script as a contortion of the Koranic verse which relates the Prophet Mohammad's night journey to heaven. For this reason he filed a case in court on behalf of "the public right."

Arab and Islamic history abounds with similar incidents in which scholars differed in their judgments. Some considered the contorted use of verses as blasphemy while others regarded it as some kind of "love poems" dedicated to love, and praise of God.

This is exactly what happened when scholars differed in their views regarding a book entitled Criticism Of Religious Thought by Sadek Al Azm and Faraj Fodeh, both of whom were tried in court because of their controversial views on religion. Fodeh has paid with his life as a consequence of public ignorance and lack of religious tolerance despite the fact that he had been one of the prominent Islamic thinkers.

Jordanian intellectuals are unanimous in their stand against Allan being tried over this disputable and controversial case. They are also united in their rejection of having the police play judges and evaluators of art and poetry because they see in this practice a grave danger posed to public freedom and stemming creativity.

Everyone accepts the ruling of the judiciary in any dispute with the belief that the judiciary will act according to civilised norms and with open minds.

SOCIETY ON THE MOVE

Not since the Gulf Crisis has Jordan witnessed such an influx of international TV anchorpersons, journalists, producers, cameramen, soundmen, film editors and the truck-loads of technical equipment that accompany them as it has this week in preparation for the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel which took place yesterday.

For the television media giants, equipped "to the nines," few professional headaches seemed to pain them. For Jordan Television (JTV) personnel, the two worries were a shortage of equipment and thus a stretching of what they do have, to and from the various sites.

Here is a glimpse of how some of our colleagues and associates from near and far were fairing as Super Wednesday drew near.

Dare we say that CNN, a once fledgling endeavour, has proven itself to be the international network that "brings you the news where it happens, as it happens"?

It certainly would appear so, because Ted Turner's baby-boomer enterprise was slated to be the godparent of U.S. television networks' coverage, as well as that of London-based international networks Reuters and WTN, for the moments leading up to, including and following one of the most important events in this region's 20th century history.

In other words CNN ran the major television media pool. This colossal task was thrown on the CNN Amman bureau (staff count: Three principals and one intern). Preparing to face the deluge of big name networks, with big name correspondents (egos and quirks noted — it's a package deal), this high energy team hired fixers, runners, translators. They pulled strings, scraped and begged to secure accommodations at the Amman Marriott Hotel, which, incidentally was forced to cancel tourist reservations during what the Tourism Ministry considers peak season.

The Atlanta-based network placed its people in Eilat, Damascus, Cairo, Jerusalem and Tel Aviv. It flew 20 of its people, plus nearly a tonne of equipment, to Amman to work in the pool operations in setting up live shots for ABC, NBC, CBS, Reuters and WTN from Amman. CNN's top brass White House correspondents were to fly in with U.S. President Bill Clinton to Aqaba on the presidential plane — a treat not many were privy to.

Nasser Judeh, who only just put on his hat as director of JTV, was his usual quick and confident self 48 hours prior to the main event, admitting that although the time factor of having only six or seven days to prepare was a bit of a strain, all was running smoothly.

For Nidal Dalgamouni, JTV veteran of the Gulf crisis days and now head of JTV's Production Department, covering His Majesty King Hussein's return to the Kingdom after surgery in September 1992 was a far greater task.

Nevertheless, with a field crew of about 90 people and the station's one OB (outside broadcasting) and two EFPs (electronic field production) vans strategically placed at major event locations and ready at a moment's notice to speed off to another site, hoping to make it in time, Dalgamouni sounded relaxed and hopeful to be able to provide live coverage of all the scheduled happenings. And all this without having to hire any extra people.

At the JTV news exchange, Dalgamouni said, staff there were coping with a deluge of foreign television station bookings for transmission nearly 24-hours-a-day.

JTV of course charges fees for these transmissions, as does the Telecommunications Corporation (TCC) which was said by some international networks to be levying charges higher than anywhere in the world.

10-minute background documentaries to be aired between live shots of the events as they unfolded, plus stand-by programmes to fill in empty air time slots where necessary. All events, Dalgamouni said, would be transmitted on Jordan Satellite Channel seen by nearly all the Arab World and North Africa. He did not expect any jamming.

One element worthy of interest is that the required accreditation of the media working out of Jordan by our Ministry of Information and those working out of Israel by its ministry, would all be for naught once everyone converged on Wadi Araba.

To the residents of the south, the four mega-satellite dishes that were installed may have appeared like "the aliens have landed."

Professionals on the Jordanian side suffered pangs of envy because they say Israeli journalists were much better equipped. How would you like it, they complained, if, as a dedicated professional, you see your counterpart from "the other side" whipping out his/her sleek mobile phone to call in a story, while you are obliged to steal a few moments on some stranger's car phone, appeal to the pity of Jordanian military personnel for use of their mobile units, or as a last resort, maybe for some the first resort, ask an Israeli journalist for the loan of his?

Meanwhile, ABC TV, which has set up shop on one entire floor of the Jordan InterContinental Hotel, expected the arrival of three crews, and one other coming with President Clinton's fleet. Primetime news anchorperson Peter Jennings, wasted no time; he based himself in Amman, and from there shuttled to Gaza, Damascus, Tel Aviv and Jerusalem, transmitting back to his ABC Nightly News programme broadcast across North America.

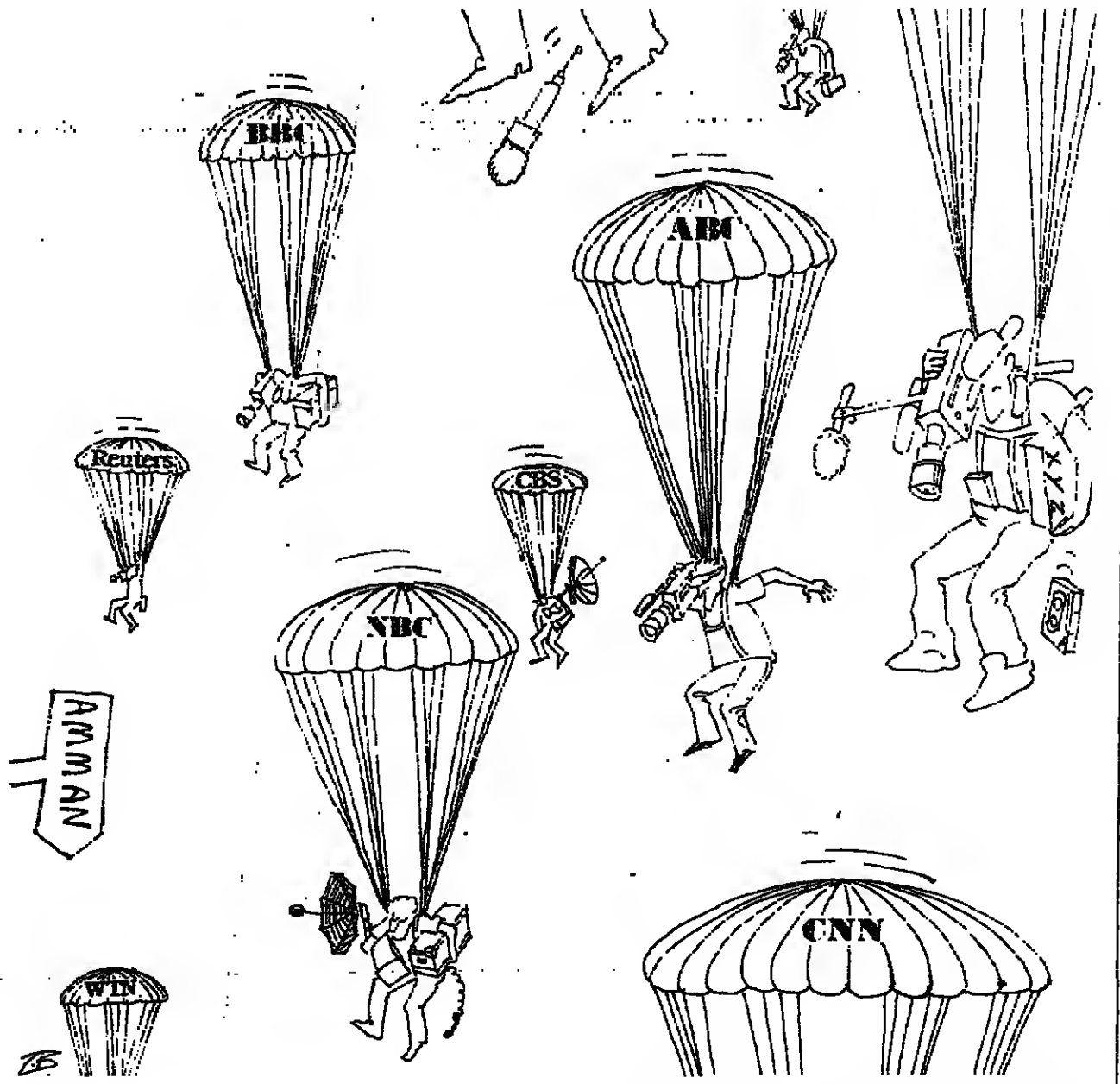
According to ABC News Regional Manager Mohammad Ajlouni, who is acting as bureau chief here for the duration, the coverage was expected to be uncomplicated because this was a planned event as opposed to instant news, and he added "it's a good event. You can't compare peace to war."

Over at NBC, producer Victor Solis, said he brought back the talents of three fixers he had hired during the Gulf crisis to get his Amman operations started.

Hisham Ayyad and Muafaq Khatib, said the London-based Solis who was pulled from work in Baghdad to cover the signing ceremony, provide all logistical support, and Ghada Ayyoub, who, he said, is pregnant with twins, works as the coordinator of feed services. Occupying 20 rooms in the Marriott Hotel, NBC expected its two White House correspondents Andrea Mitchell and Jim Miklashefski, and three White House producers to also fly in with Clinton's entourage and split their reporting between the morning and evening shows.

Solis seemed happy to be back in Amman. He said the news spots he had done through JTV went smoothly, adding that everyone there was very nice. He said of Amman, "It's a great city and it's really changing... It's becoming more cosmopolitan." He said his London crew was happy to come in out of the foggy city's rains. But, although everything was falling nicely into place, he said, all his team, himself included, were complaining about the hamburgers at the Marriott being too dry. Suggestions were offered.

The excitement generated by all the activity in Aqaba since the announcement that President Clinton would be arriving there for the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace agreement may have worked to blur the vision, if not other senses and cells, of one Shihan weekly reporter. While in Aqaba last week a Shihan hack reported that he saw U.S. Marines using light weapons on the beach front and he



immediately concluded that Jordan was being invaded.

All that coverage about Haiti was bound to have its impact here. U.S. embassy sources said that they knew of no U.S. Marines in Aqaba at that time.

Cuerpo diplomatico

Foreign culture abounded in Amman this week with partial overlapping of events from two passionate Latin cultures, the Spanish and the Italian. And, while the presentations of both European countries met with great success, the work of the embassies' staffs deserves mention, especially when senior diplomats seemed to be competing fiercely for audiences to their happenings.

Example: While a Spanish envoy hosting guests at the opening dinner of Spanish Cultural & Gastronomic Week was explaining the difficulties in flying in fresh ingredients from the Iberian peninsula for the week's dinner, an Italian envoy was caught tempting a few of the very same guests with offers to a pasta dinner, followed by an Italian art opening, and finally a treat to a laolo and Vittorio Taviani movie for the first night that the two cultural events would collide.

By Friday night, some of the Spanish embassy staff were beginning to lose steam.

But for First Secretary Gustavo de Aristegui, imbibing in gourmet dinners followed by performances nearly every night never slowed him down. One the contrary, he appeared exhilarated. What spurred him even more than the menus, the performers and that this was one of the largest events Spain has ever exported, was that his enthusiasm was not

matched by some of the organisations he had to deal with in arranging this cultural extravaganza. And he let everybody know, albeit unofficially.

The Germans had a mixed bag of events on their hands: National elections and Oktoberfest. Charge D'Affaires Michael Bock and his Venezuelan wife, with a helping hand from embassy spokesperson Ingrid Liedgens, hosted a "Watch the Results" open house, replete with German sausages and sweet mustard, a jumbo screen TV with live coverage from Bonn and a chalkboard to keep a tally of the results as they were coming in.

Seen about mid-way through the rather sedate gathering, as most of the guests were not surprised with the election results, were other diplomats including the German ambassador, Heinz Reiners and his wife Maria, the new ambassador from Norway, Tove Kijewski, and Canada's envoy Andrew Robinson, members of the media, representatives of the ministries of Information and Foreign Affairs, German embassy staff and friends and associates of the embassy.

And while we are talking about bilateral relations, not only friends at the J.T. were happy to learn that Cristina, the doyenne of the spouses of the diplomatic corps, and Husband/Ambassador Tarek Khan Afridi are expecting their first child. The whole town rejoiced for them.

Jennifer Hamarnah

One step back

By Jean-Claude Elias

The war that software developers are waging against each other seems to make them forget one main quality that their offsprings are expected to have: Practicality.

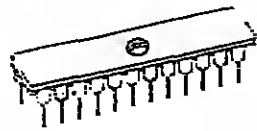
By encouraging software companies to release complex works, users may have to share part of the responsibility for creating monster programmes with features that people rarely use. Software designers however are the ones who, in the end, decide what the programmes should or should not do.

Assuming you are a normal, healthy, average personal computer (PC) user, and run your machine mainly for word processing. Would you go for the latest version of Microsoft Word for Windows, numbered 6.0? Not necessarily.

WinWord 6.0, as it is called, is feature-laden, a masterpiece, a beauty, a pleasure to use, provided... your PC is, at least, a 486-DX2-66 with 200 MB of disk space (200 million characters) and 8 MB of main memory. This is not Mr. Everybody's computer. Not for the time being at least.

If your equipment is a 386-DX40 or a 486-DX-33 — the most commonly found computer — then you better go back to WinWord 2.0, the previous release of the same programme. It has enough processing power and built-in facilities to help you achieve the same version as 6.0 and probably faster. Unless, of course, and for a very specific reason, you need the sophistication of its successor. WinWord is just an example, among others, that I have considered here and the argument should by no means be taken

chip talk



negatively against WinWord 6.0 that I am personally using, having a machine that is powerful enough to handle it at reasonable speed.

If we take data base programmes for instance, software developers may be surprised to know how many people still relies on dBase III-Data Base III—that was released several years ago by Ashton-Tate. In spite of many upgrades and improvements, the regular PC amateur lies on dBase III more than any other version. The reason? It's simple, very fast and is powerful enough to process most jobs.

In order to appeal to people, technology must be simple, fast, reliable and practical before anything else. Features and raw power come next. It is no surprise, in photography for example, to see how small, pocket size cameras are again so popular when there are also high quality but bulky and complicated machines on the market. Software designers may have reached a point where one or two steps back could be advisable.

Iron in the soul

By Samer Ghaleb Bagaceen

The question of identity has returned to us. It has returned to us in Jordanian politics and Jordanian cultural politics today.

To be Jordanian is to know yourself in relation to, say, the Italians, the Mediterraneans, and the passionate Scandinavian soul. You go round the entire globe: When you know what everybody else is, then you are what they are not. Identity is always, in that sense, a structured representation which only achieves its positive through the narrow eye of the negative; it has to go through the eye of the needle of the other before it can construct itself. What is more is that identity is always in part a narrative, always a kind of representation, always within representation.

Collective social identities were formed in, and stabilised by, the long-range historical processes which have produced the modern world. These were staged and stabilised by industrialisation, by capitalism, by socialism, by urbanisation, by the formation of the world market, by the social and sexual division of labour, by colonialism, and by the struggle for national liberation; by the dominance of the nation state, and by the identification between Westernisation and the notion of modernity itself. Identity then is always in the process of formation; it is never a sealed or a closed totality.

A cultural intellectual is faced with the task of not accepting the politics of identity as given, but has to

show how all representations are constructed, for what purpose, by whom, and with what components.

For us who grew up in a cultural framework permeated with the idea that Arab nationalism was all important, it was a distressed and unfulfilled nationalism plagued with conspiracies and enemies, both internal and external, and obstacles to overcome for which no price was too high. But now, this nationalism, as in all other aspects of the post-modern culture, has resolved itself into smaller and smaller units. This is not to say that the past was better, simply more heartily interlinked. In Culture and Imperialism, Edward Said argues that the effort to homogenise and isolate populations in the name of nationalism has led to colossal sacrifices and failures. He describes the general air of mediocrity and corruption that hangs over a Middle East superbly endowed culturally and historically and amply blessed with gifted individuals as an immense puzzle and a cause for disappointment.

As part of the latest economic and political upheavals, the middle class, especially in our capital city, has lost its identity. It now has economic interests that are more mobile, its social role models are much more homogenous, and it is completely lacking in ideology. In this middle class everyone looks the same, everything is horribly anonymous, everyone aspires to be successful; lifestyles, fashions, holidays and leisure activities all tend to be uniform; pragmatism is the rule of behaviour unanimously cried out for and pursued.

TIME FOR RIP TICKLING READING

- ★ He has a face like a flower — a cauliflower.
- ★ His mouth is so big, when he yawns his ears disappear.
- ★ He has a Roman nose, it roams all over his face.
- ★ He has a waving hair — it's waving goodbye.
- ★ He once picked a snake to kill a stick.
- ★ He kisses the cat and puts his wife out.
- ★ If you put a stick on her hairdo, you could mop the floor with it.

LET'S CHAT IN ARABIC

DRIVING

- Are you a clever driver?
Hal anta saa'iq maher?
- I think so.
Azanno zalek.
- Have you a private car?
Hal ladayka sayyara khassosi?
- Yes, I've bought it most recently.
Na'am, lakadishit raytoha hadithan.
- How many seats is your car?
Kam mak'adan fee sayyaratik?
- It's a four-seater. And the motor is 40 horsepower.
Innaha that arba'at maka'id wa-kowwatul motor arba'oona hissanan.
- What about a drive to Jerash?
Ma rayoka fix-zahab ela Jarash?
- That would be very nice.
Sayakoon zalek lateefan jiddan.
- Have you got your driver's licence?
Hal ma'aka rukhsatul kiyada?
- Of course. I always carry it on me.

ON THE LIGHTER SIDE

By Mohammad A. Shuqair

- Tab'an, Innani daa'imam ahmilooha ma'e.
— Have you inflated the tyres?
Hal nafakhta al-tarat?
Jamee'oha saleema
— They're all right.
— How far is the nearest station?
Kam tab'od akrah mahatta?
— Five miles, but why?
Khamsato amial, wa laken limaza?
— I've run out of petrol.
Lakad nafaza min'ni al-banzen.

★ ★ ★ ★

JOKES

A farmer set out to sell his turnips. At the town ball bridge his donkey balked. Furious, the farmer began to beat it.
"Hey, man, have you no conscience? A passer-by shouted to him.
"No, sir, it's infested, the peasant answered, "I only have turnips."

★ ★ ★

"Two tickets for my wife and myself, please, and a half ticket for the child," a man asked at the ticket office.
"What do you mean. He's a man already. Just look at him, he wears long pants," the clerk joked.
"All right. Then let me have a ticket for the boy

and a half ticket for the wife. She wears short pants," the man replied with deep conviction.

★ ★ ★ ★

BANK OF KNOWLEDGE

1. Place the following civilisations in their order of time: — Aztec, Cretan, Greek, Persian, Sumerian.
2. What are the four chief patterns of clouds?
3. From what part of the animal do the following joints or cuts come from?
SIRLOIN, CUTLET, GAMMON, STEAK, BRISKET.
4. From what language did these words come into English?
MOCCASIN, BOOMERANG, ORANGE, TOMATO, POTATO, CANARY, BUNGALOW, ADMIRAL, TULIP, TEA.

★ ★ ★ ★

YOUR CHARACTER IN FOCUS

Born on June 9

- ★ Inventive, mechanical and ingenious with a love of chemistry, science and mathematics.
- ★ Highly charged like a dynamo and makes sparks

fly all over around him.

- ★ Likely to have estrangements with his relations and trouble with brothers, sisters and members of his family.
- ★ Frank and outspoken and inclined to make enemies by hitting straight from the shoulder.
- ★ Regarded as fighter who shows aggression, resistance, dash, courage and quickness.
- ★ Fond of games and vigorous exercise.
- ★ Has strong sexual passions and attracted towards the opposite sex.
- ★ Prepared to go through any ordeal to gratify his desires.
- ★ Backed by self-control, moral courage and the power of forgiveness.
- ★ Short-tempered and better uses his words.
- ★ Distinguished by his strength of will, sympathy and consideration.

★ ★ ★ ★

PERPLEXITIES

(1) INSERT THE MISSING NUMBER

14	9	5
21	8	13
28	9	?

(2) UNDERLINE THE ODD-MAN-OUT

ANT, SPIDER, BEE, MOTI, MIDGE

(3) ★ What begins with T, ends with T, and has T in it?

★ These two brothers live not too far away, one on the left, one on the right; but they never see each other.
Can you guess who or what they are?

Unique autobiography brings Syrian castle to life

By Jonathan Wright

Reuter

SHAYZAR, Syria — The people of modern Shayzar, an unremarkable breezeblock village on the River Orontes in north-western Syria, remember its most illustrious son only vaguely as the man in the history books.

There is no plaque to Ossama Bin Munqidh on the gate of Shayzar Castle or even a watchman to show visitors around and revive for them this corner of the mediaeval Levant when Franks, Byzantines, Arabs and Turks were fighting for the land.

But the castle and its environs, its lords and their families, some of their retainers, artisans

and peasants, are known to historians by name and in detail — their characters, their quirks, the way they lived and the way they died.

For Ossama, a Syrian Arab nobleman of the 12th century, alone of his generation on either side in the long conflict known in the west as the crusades, left an autobiography, rich in anecdotes from the 40 years he lived at Shayzar.

The same strategic stone bridge at which he skirmished with Franks and other enemies still crosses the Orontes at the end of the gorge which defends the castle on its eastern flank.

A new concrete bridge now crosses in parallel, taking decorated country buses and trucks loaded with cotton along the main road from Hama, through the drained marshes of the Ghab and on to the Mediterranean port of Latakia.

Only the feeblest memory of Ossama lives on — another missed opportunity by Syria's underdeveloped tourist industry. "Dunno, must have died before I was born," said a man who keeps sheep in the yard of his house near the castle gatehouse.

"Yes, I've heard of Ossama Bin Munqidh," said Mahfouz, a grocer on

the main road. "He lived in the castle until the great earthquake destroyed it. That was back in the year eighteen hundred and something."

The disaster, known at the time as the earthquake of Hama, was in 1157 and it wiped out all the house of Munqidh, except Ossama, his family in exile and the wife of the lord, Ossama's cousin Taj al Dawla. She was pulled alive from the ruins.

Philip Hitti, the Lebanese-American historian of Syria and Lebanon, says Ossama's book, the 155-page Book of Learning By Example, stands in a class of its own. "There is hardly any-

thing superior to this one in its simplicity of narrative, dignity and wealth of contents and general human interest. It gives us a glimpse into Syrian methods of warfare... and ushers us into the intimacies of Muslim court life as well as private home life," he wrote.

"But its chief value (is) that it deals with a point of military and cultural contact between the east and the west during a period about which our information from other sources is especially meagre," he added.

On one page Ossama is slaying the lions which then roamed the Syrian countryside, on the next he comments on the way

Franks behave in the public baths in the Lebanese port of Tyre. On another he narrates the intrigues at the paranoid Fatimid court in Cairo, where he spent 10 years as a courtier.

But Ossama's a poet, knight and diplomat, dictating to a scribe in Damascus a few years before he died in 1188 at the age of 93, constantly harks back to his childhood home, the extraordinary castle on the orontes.

The castle, in reality a fortified town balanced on a rocky spur, dominates one of the most important routes in the region and was a constant battleground between the rival

forces.

In most ways, life was nasty, brutish and short. Warfare was endemic, travellers who went astray might be massacred without mercy, and simple ailments might lead to excruciating death. All sides took hostages and often broke their solemn agreements.

The Arabs and their new Frankish neighbours in the Crusader kingdoms on the coast were not always hostile.

Ossama visited occupied Jerusalem on several occasions, prayed in Al Aqsa Mosque and was familiar enough with the templars there for him to call them "my friends."

He drew a distinction between Franks who had assimilated to the Levant through long residence and recent arrivals, whom he described as "ruder in character."

But, in remarks which uncannily echo modern stereotypes, he relates with bewilderment how Frankish knights allowed their wives to talk with other men and took them to the public baths.

"When one comes to recount cases regarding the Franks, one cannot but glorify God and sanctify him, for one sees them as animals possessing the virtues of courage and fighting, but nothing else," he concludes.

By Mari Yamaguchi

The Associated Press

TOKYO — Riding on a crowded commuter train, packed in tightly with other passengers, Yoko Kurihara felt a hand reaching inside her clothing.

But she did not confront her assailant. She simply fled the train at the next stop.

"I was so disgusted and shocked," recalled Ms. Kurihara, who now heads a women's group. "Groping doesn't leave visible scars, but it's no different from rape."

Of all the forms of sexual harassment faced by Japanese girls and women, unwelcome fondling on a crowded train is probably one of the most pervasive.

Violent crime is rare in Japan, but groping — ranging from rubbing up against a victim to thrusting an intrusive hand under her clothing — is an everyday occurrence, especially on crowded commuter trains.

A woman's group in Osaka, Japan's second-largest city, says three-quarters of women in their 20s and 30s who responded to a questionnaire reported encountering a groping at least once. The victims said that fellow passengers, even if aware of what was going on, almost never intervened.

Confronted with a groping on a crowded train, few women cry out or resist —

choosing, as Ms. Kurihara did, to flee instead. But their anger and disdain is summed up by the slang term for gropers — "chikan," or "idiot man."

Fed-up feminists say train gropers are a telling example of the obstacles women face in their efforts to win fair treatment in Japanese society.

"Groping reflects nothing but sexism," said Noriko Yamaguchi, a women's rights activist. "Throughout history, our country has been too tolerant of men's sexual misdeeds."

Underlining that tolerance, one self-confessed "chikan" has written a book about his experiences. Samu Yamamoto's

book, "A Groping Diary," is selling well at Tokyo bookstores.

KK bestsellers, its publisher, says 50,000 copies have been sold since it went on sale in April — about five times the average sales figure.

In the book, Mr. Yamamoto takes freely about molesting an average of a dozen women and girls a day the past 26 years.

A bespectacled 42-year-old illustrator at a sports newspaper, Mr. Yamamoto said he counted on women being too embarrassed to cry out — or too fearful of accusing the wrong man, an easy mistake to take in a crowded train car.

"I wouldn't try groping

in the United States because American women seem too tough," he said in an interview. "But Japanese women tolerate us — or I'd be in jail by now."

A convicted groping can be sentenced to up to seven years, but police say there is little they can do if women do not report assaults.

"Be brave and speak up, or they're encouraged to advance further," said Akito Mochihara, a Tokyo Metropolitan Police investigator.

But many women who have encountered gropers say shame and shyness caused them to simply freeze. Others fear retaliation.

One 25-year-old office worker, who did not want her name used, said she wheeled around and stared down a man who had been rubbing up against her.

He refused to meet her gaze, and quickly got off the train. But the woman discovered, to her fury, that he had first stuck a wad of chewing gum in her long hair.

Some women's groups have urged the creation of women-only train cars. But East Japan Railway Co., whose trains carry 13 million passengers in met-

ropolitan areas every day, has shown little enthusiasm for the idea.

Spokesman Akihiro Takimizu called the idea unworkable, saying it would make for even more congestion.

Even women's groups acknowledge such a step would not address the underlying problem.

"Unless men change, this is the only way we can be safe," Ms. Kurihara said. "But it's not a fundamental solution."

Mr. Yamamoto, for his part, said he has suffered

few repercussions in his personal or professional life since going public about his groping.

He said that he got a few critical calls after a round of TV appearances to plug the book, but that most calls came from young women wanting advice on how to foil a groping like him.

In the interview, Mr. Yamamoto displayed only one brief flash of awareness of the consequences of behaviour like his. He recounted how his wife once came home and told him she had been molested on the train.

"I felt offended," he said.

JTV PROGRAMME NOT RECEIVED

Burt Lancaster — from acrobatics to Elmer Gantry OBITUARY

LOS ANGELES (R) — Burt Lancaster was the Hollywood film star who would not be typecast — an actor who could play the epitome of evil in one film and a larger-than-life hero in the next.

Lancaster, whose death at the age of 80 was announced last Friday, led a successful double life on screen for four decades, juggling safe, commercial roles with daring parts like Elmer Gantry and the Birdman of Alcatraz.

Millions of film fans have fixed images of Lancaster — holding the Bible up as the sham Evangelist Elmer Gantry, telling Tony Curtis to "match me Sidney" in Sweet Smell of Success and making love to Deborah Kerr on the beach as the waves roll around them in From Here to Eternity.

Lancaster appeared in more than 70 films but never studied acting. He broke into show business as a circus acrobat and learned about the movie business as he went along.

With his rugged good looks, Lancaster was a natural for tough guy, action roles. But the notoriously stubborn actor sought challenging parts and won the Academy

Award as Best Actor for Elmer Gantry in 1960.

He rose to stardom in his first film, playing a washed-up prize fighter waiting for death in the 1946 version of the Ernest Hemingway short story The Killers.

By 1955 a string of hits — Jim Thorpe — All American, Come Back Little Sheba, From Here to Eternity and Vera Cruz — firmly established him as a box office giant.

Such success could have got him typecast for life but Lancaster refused to be cornered. The actor was lauded in many roles, especially when playing a loser with hints of heroism.

That quality served him extremely well in one of his last and most highly regarded performances in Louis Malle's 1980 black comedy Atlantic City set in the gambling centre.

He played an ageing gangland errand boy who briefly struck it rich. The role won him his fourth Oscar nomination.

He scoffed at those who said Atlantic City represented a comeback for him, noting he had made 16 films in the 1970s, including several with good friend Kirk Douglas.



A picture of the late actor Burt Lancaster dated March 25, 1985, after he received an Oscar for the lead role in Elmer Gantry (AFP photo)

"I think what people may be trying to say is that I had a period in the early '60 when I did films like The Leopard, Birdman Of Alcatraz, Judgment At

Nuremberg and Elmer Gantry, which, from an industry point of view, was the high point of my earning capacity and my star status."

He also won acclaim for his role as an eccentric, star-gazing Texas oil baron in the 1983 comedy Local Hero and as the ageing baseball player in Field Of Dreams in 1989.

Lancaster underwent quadruple bypass heart surgery in 1983 and the heart trouble forced him to cut his workload and spend more time at his two favourite pastimes — golf and reading.

Four years ago, Lancaster's health took a turn for the worse when he suffered a stroke that left him partially paralysed. For most of his remaining years, he remained confined to his country city condominium.

Born in New York City on Nov. 2, 1913, the son of a postal worker, Lancaster was an outstanding athlete. He won a basketball scholarship to New York University but instead joined a circus troupe at the age of 17 as an acrobat.

After six years of touring under the big top, Lancaster left to be a floor walker in the lingerie department of a Chicago store.



U.S. actor Burt Lancaster in the film Atlantic City by Louis Malle in 1980 (AFP photo)

first taste of acting. Assigned to the Special Services Division of the Fifth Army, he performed acrobatics for allied troops in Australia, North Africa and Italy.

He made his New York stage debut in 1945 in A Sound Of Hunting. The play flopped, but Lancaster's powerful physique and cheerful blue-eyed grin earned him a ticket to Hollywood.

In 1948, Lancaster and his then-agent, Harold Hecht, formed their own independent production company, an almost revolutionary move that played a major part in breaking the monopoly powers of the big studios.

To help finance their projects, Hecht got a contract with leading film producer Hal Wallis, for whom he made Come Back Little Sheba (1952),

The Rose Tattoo (1955), The Rainmaker (1956) and Gunfight At The O.K. Corral (1957).

One of Lancaster's biggest successes of this period was the tough, honest sergeant in From Here To Eternity (1953), for which he won the New York Film Critics' Best Actor Award and another Oscar nomination for his famed beach love scene with Deborah Kerr.

Designers recall glamour years as woman resurfaces

By Lee Yanowitch
Reuters

PARIS — Sexy feminine shapes are back, with slinky women in clinging dresses and visible panties replacing the androgenous amazons and shapeless waifs of recent seasons.

That was the message of the Paris spring-summer ready-to-wear collections that ended Tuesday.

The nine-day season saw designers turning for inspiration to 1930s, '40s and '50 glamour that put the female form in the

limelight thanks to the silver screen's sultry femmes fatales.

Several designers went for the 1940s hourglass jackets and tight skirts hemmed below the knee that actress Lauren Bacall wore when she played puppy to Humphrey Bogart in The Big Sleep.

Britain's John Galiano did these best in his abbreviated show of 27 pieces to a limited audience of exclusive buyers and a few fashion writers. He tailored the clothes so

closely it looked as if he stitched them right on the supermodels.

Valentino was heavily influenced by the 1930s, showing glamorous Mae West gowns that clung down the leg then flared gently at the knee.

But the retro craze caught the Italian designer in a timewarp somewhere between sleek seductive evening wear and the bosom-hugging bodices, pinched waists and

spreading petticoat skirts of Christian Dior's 1947 new look.

Among avant-garde designers, Belgium's Dries Van Noten and Swedish-born Marcel Marongiu chose 1950s' buoyant femininity — Van Noten with his dusky pastels and new, understated elegance and Marongiu with his cropped bomber jackets, Capri trousers and teased hair with black headbands.

Forever in a class of his own, Jean-Paul Gaultier's look at the entire century of fashion was the high-point of the season with a dream-like parade of Edwardian lace, flapper dresses and wartime suits and turbans.

Despite the new longer length, micro-miniskirts are still going strong — Karl Lagerfeld slashed chanel suit skirts at the panty line, gaultier cut them still higher and even thoroughbred fashion house hermes got a taste of hemlines high on the thigh.

Platforms and spike heels were contagious — they started as 50s-style bulky pumps by Vivienne Westwood or Van Noten, then clunky ration-card platforms at Gaultier and Lagerfeld's chanel.

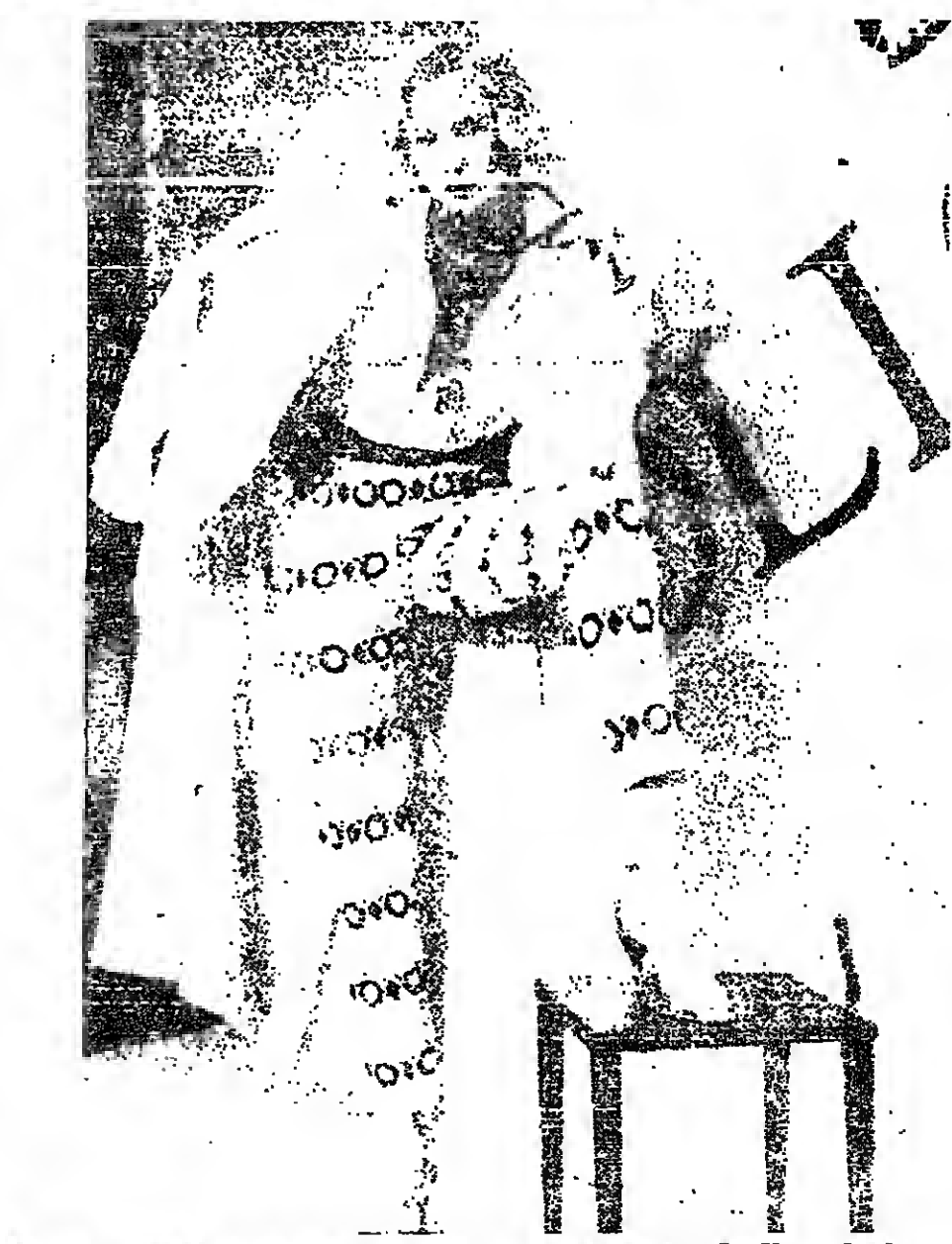
With no consensus on hemlines, designers are turning their creative forces in other directions.

Visible panties are the new staple for next summer — if you have the legs to wear them.

They made a big splash at Chanel, sparkling under skirts that flew open at the front, at Dior where Gianfranco Ferre matched them with perky plaids, and in Jean-Charles de Castelbajac's Crayola coloured poplins and linens.

The pagoda shoulder launched by Yves Saint Laurent popped up on several catwalks on wasp-waist jackets and structured little tops with heart-shaped necklines. But that did not exclude soft jackets and dresses, especially by avant-garde designers.

As for colours, black



Model Nadja Auermann shows collection by Italian designer off patterned trousers in combination with a silk blouse and 1995 spring/summer fashion: a mohair jacket of the "Oliver" previews (AFP photo)

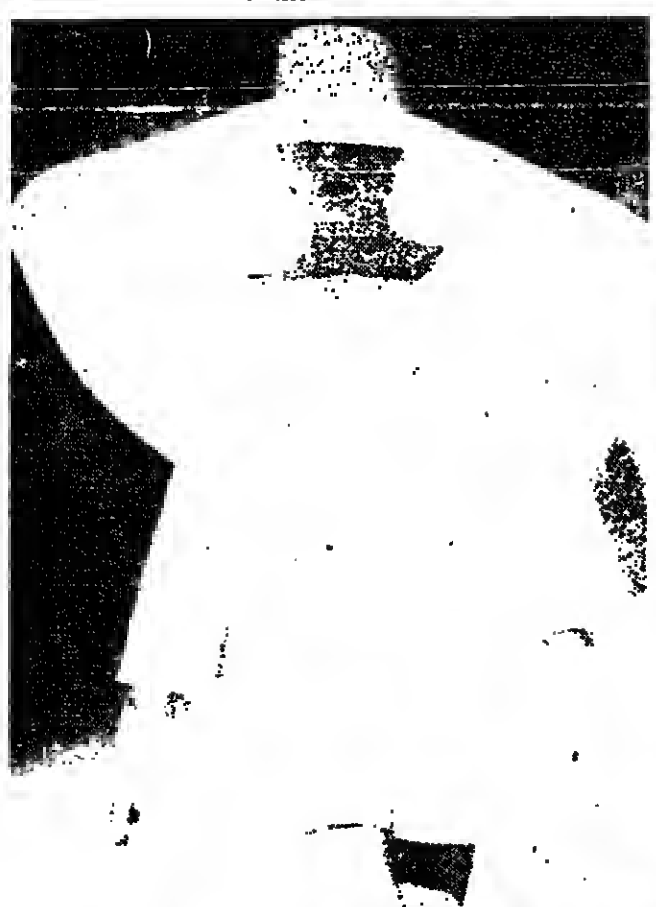
was still strong, with candy shades by Lagerfeld at Chloe. Chanel and his own line and feminine pastels at shows by Valentino, Lolita Lempicka, Claude Montana and even

Christian Lacroix.

Emanuel Ungaro and Lacroix, whose energetic, imaginative show was a crowd-pleaser, built on to the disco craze set off by Gianni Versace at Janu-

ary's haute couture.

The little black dress is surfacing as fashion's greatest survivor, still a forceful element in evening wear at the major houses.



A model presents a large sun hat combined with a large blouse and shorts by Italian designer Gianfranco Ferre during the 1995 spring/summer fashion previews in Milan (AFP photo)



American singer Madonna and French designer Jean-Paul Gaultier stroll down the catwalk at the end of Gaultier's 1995 spring/summer ready-to-wear show in Paris. Madonna models a gold lame vest with transparent ankle-length silk dress (AFP photo)

Model Carla Bruni bides her time in the limelight

By Samantha Conti
Reuters

MILAN — Carla Bruni, Italy's only supermodel, is in the grip of a hot, new love-hate affair — with modelling.

The blue-eyed 26-year-old's romantic links with rock stars and playboy billionaires have made her a darling of tabloid newspapers.

But the woman whose million-dollar face and never-ending legs have graced the covers of the world's top fashion magazines has other things on her mind.

She thinks a lot of models are paid too much for the work they do and that the world is having a ma-

the runway and wear clothes, but we earn more than heart surgeons and AIDS researchers, more than competent, intelligent people who have studied for years and will save lives," Bruni told Reuters in an interview.

"The world is going wrong, that's for sure. We're running into superficiality, always running after money, after glamour and nobody's ever thinking about being a better human being," she said in her hallmark husky voice.

But is Bruni, the Italian beauty with the high cheekbones, tawny hair and almond-shaped eyes, ready to kiss the business

to quit," she says, puffing a cigarette during a break between shows at this month's Milan spring and summer 1995 ready to wear collections.

"Not many jobs are so much fun. Apart from the money side — the unfair amount of money which is difficult to let go — you get used to the travel and to being admired. It's very much a love and hate relationship."

Bruni, born into an affluent northern Italian family whose fortune came from the Turin-based Ceat electric cable and tyre company, is considered an intellectual and a personality in the modelling world.

"How do you say?" in

the one-eyed man is king," she said.

It is Bruni's reputation, however, for being professional and polite in what many say is a world of whining, demanding divas, that makes her stand out.

"Carla is a first-rate professional and doesn't cause anybody any problems. She is polite and serious," said Gabriella Mazzei who works for Showroom, a company that helps designers cast models for their shows.

Bruni, who can earn up to \$30,000 per show, said she works hard at being human.

"I try to adapt myself to other people, try to cultivate humanity and kindness. My mother taught

because all the things I have, I have by chance — my beauty, my money, everything."

But the supermodel, who says she had "a strong relationship" with Eric Clapton five years ago and has been linked in the press to Mick Jagger and American billionaire Donald Trump, argues her real ticket to fame was her penchant for famous men.

"People know me for the boyfriends I've had," she said matter-of-factly.

Bruni has just ended a relationship with the French actor Vincent Perez and fallen for Arno Klarsfeld, the French lawyer who represented civil plaintiffs during the trial in April of French wartime collaborator Paul

He is the son of Nazi bunters Serge and Beate Klarsfeld, and is from Paris where Bruni grew up.

Bruni's family moved to France when she was a child because her parents feared their children would be kidnapped during Italy's "years of lead" in the 1970s when abductions and murders were rife.

"If I can spend my time with the 20 people who will leave their mark on history in my lifetime, then I will. Fame is not interesting in itself but for what there is behind it, and fame is often deserved."

As for Bruni's own career, Mazzei said the su-

reached the pinnacle — she's one of the most famous and best-paid models in the world.

But it does not look as if she's destined to become another Claudia Schiffer, the German model touted as the new Brigitte Bardot and who has become a cult figure.

"Carla's beauty is very Italian, very classical. But I don't think she will ever become the 'rage' like Claudia Schiffer and I don't think she's trying to either," said Mazzei.

Still, Bruni said she had learned to use the press and their coverage of her relationships — real and rumoured — to keep the public interested.

"I am certainly not what

kept the image of the bad girl and I used it because I knew there was no way I was going to change their mind.

"It isn't very nice to always have to talk about who I was with or whether or not I was their girlfriend. It's not very interesting, sometimes it's not even true but if that's what they want then that's what I'll give and, in the end, I'm the winner."

Bruni says she will stick with modelling for the next two or three years and then try to lead a quieter life.

"I'd rather leave on my way down," she says. "Two years from now on one is even going to remember me as who I was."

A safe preventive vaccine against influenza

By Rima Cortbawi
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With the start of the influenza season, preventive measures must be taken by individuals to avoid one of the most contagious diseases of all times. Immunity against this viral disease in Jordan can now be granted by the administration of a vaccine, which should be injected once every year, to minimise the risk of contracting such a severe illness that carries lethal risks.

On the occasion of launching the forthcoming season's influenza vaccine in Jordan, a seminar was held at one of the drug information centres of the country. Attended by 100 delegates from different medical fields, the seminar was followed by a panel discussion on the subject of influenza and the new vaccine.

The meeting was conducted by Elie Meena, a pathologist who is the marketing and medical director of Pasteur Mérieux (French vaccine-manufacturing institute) for the Middle-East and North Africa.

Dr. Meena discussed international surveillance against influenza, clinical diagnosis of the disease, related complications and the importance of vaccination for "at-risk" persons in a medical sense and for work institutions from an economic point of view.

"Influenza vaccine has been widely used in Europe and America for over 20 years, which confirms its success in minimising the risks of influenza epidemics," said Dr. Meena. He confirmed that the vaccine's compositions for each coming year are dictated by World Health Organisation (WHO)

experts, who collect data from 118 WHO-recognised national institutions for influenza in 81 countries and three WHO collaborating influenza research centres.

The gathered data gives information on the virus strains that ought to be used in producing the vaccines for that year, according to Dr. Meena. The influenza vaccine is then made from highly purified egg-grown viruses having been inactivated — i.e. rendered non-infectious so they do not cause the disease but rather develop antibodies to fight it giving immunity from it — explained Dr. Meena.

"Isolation of the influenza virus is not a simple thing. A complete surveillance system needs to be followed through, starting with medical practitioners carrying naso-pharyngeal (throat) sampling on their patients with influenza symptoms, sending them rapidly and efficiently to national reference centres, which in turn delivers information to WHO for directing the vaccine manufacture," said Dr. Meena. The first isolation of the infectious agent (the virus) was done in 1933 by Smith Laidlaw and Andrews, in the U.K.

The different strains of influenza can be classified according to the interior antigenic compositions into three types: A, B and C — type A mainly including variants which may be regrouped into subtypes depending on their external antigenic make-up. According to Dr. Meena, type A is the most virulent and commonly found, by type C is the least common. So, vaccines are usually composed of two strains of type A and one strain of type B. Variations in antigenic compositions within a subtype, especially in type A strains, means that vaccines constituents have to be

changed accordingly on a yearly basis. "But even when the same strains appear on two consecutive years, the vaccine should still be injected twice because the number of antibodies — and therefore the immunity — decreases throughout the year.

Also, infection with one strain does not provide immunity against distantly related strains of the same subtype, and so the vaccines have to be very specific, according to Dr. Meena.

A common public misconception relates common colds to influenza. "Colds and influenza are two separate illnesses. Influenza symptoms include fever (with body temperature reaching above 39°C), shivering, muscular pains, headaches, problems in the respiratory tract, throat pains, dry sporadic coughs and conjunctivitis. So the fact that some cold symptoms appear results in this misconception, even though colds are caused by totally different viruses," explained Dr. Meena.

Influenza vaccine, which does not prevent common colds, is important for "at-risk" populations. These, according to Dr. Meena, include people over 65 years, people living under medical conditions, adults and children with chronic metabolic, renal respiratory, pulmonary, cardiovascular and immunological disorders, children or adolescents (from 6 months to 18 years) under long term treatment with aspirin and pregnant women — especially under medical treatment — after three months of pregnancy.

Naturally, high-risk individuals, when infected, are more likely to require hospitalisation (and sometimes meet death) than the general public are.

From an economic viewpoint, U.S. studies show

that the cost of contracting the disease in a population is four times the cost of vaccine research, manufacture and distribution, according to Dr. Meena. Savings and benefits of the vaccine (which has a certain cost) are reaped by avoiding an epidemic and all the related direct costs of treatment and the indirect costs of lost workers productivity. "Once a person suffers from influenza, no effective treatment can be given, but time and bed rest must be granted," said Dr. Meena.

This trivalent vaccine under the trade name of Vaxigrip has 89 per cent clinical efficacy and is considered safe, according to Dr. Meena, because the most frequent side-effect is soreness at the vaccination site, for less than 30 per cent of vaccinees, lasting a maximum of two days. Fever, malaise and other systemic symptoms occur infrequently, most often affecting individuals with no exposure to the influenza virus antigens in the vaccine, and they do not last longer than two days.

"Immediate, presumably allergic, reactions occur rarely after vaccination. The vaccine is also safe for pregnant women regardless of the stage of pregnancy, and even in the first trimester, undelayed vaccination is favourable under high risk conditions or at the start of the influenza season," Dr. Meena added.

This viral disease, which was first described by Hippocrates as early as 412 B.C. and which was responsible for more than two million deaths during worldwide pandemic of "Spanish" influenza in 1918, can now be prevented in Jordan by a safe and effective vaccine.

Doctor tests limits by using drugs for abortion

By Kiley Armstrong
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Soothing classical music wafts above a mother-and-child sculpture in the earth-toned waiting room. The setting, a Park Avenue doctor's office, belies the political and scientific upheaval within.

In his book-lined inner sanctum, Dr. Richard Hausknecht can't escape the unrelenting phone. Doctors and patients around the nation have heard he performs abortions with drugs instead of surgery, and many want to try it.

Dr. Hausknecht concedes he's "a little bit of a rebel." Back in the '60s, when he was a gynaecology resident at Yale, he handed out diaphragms in defiance of a state ban on contraceptives that was later struck down.

He has long been dis-

tressed by delays in marketing RU486, the French abortion pill. Earlier this year, he was in the shower when the idea popped into his head: Why not offer an alternative?

He pored over American and European research on two other, available drugs.

One, called Methotrexate, is a tissue-growth inhibitor used to treat cancer, arthritis and psoriasis. For decades, doctors also have used it to end ectopic pregnancies, which develop outside the uterus.

The other is Mifeprostol, an ulcer medicine that also hastens labour. Dr. Hausknecht decided to use the drugs to induce abortions. He ran ads in the New York Times, offering "a new, safe and effective approach to the termination of early pregnancy utilising FDA approved medications."

Since January 1993, researchers have been trying to determine whether the two drugs, used in tandem, to induce abortions, are safe and effective. In the meantime, their use in a non-research setting falls into a gray area.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) says a doctor may prescribe a drug for an unorthodox use — from time to time. But "if it's large number of patients, or when data is being gathered systematically, it's considered research," said FDA spokesman Larry Bachonik.

Dr. Hausknecht has applied for FDA research status. He insists his technique is "not research, but innovative medical care." He has provided the drugs to 126 women.

Dr. David Grimes of the University of California at San Francisco, an FDA-approved researcher of the drugs, said doctors

know too little about their effects to prescribe them even to a single patient.

Dr. Grimes is collaborating with Dr. Mitchell Creinin, who pioneered research on the drugs.

"I'm upset that this is happening," said Dr. Creinin of the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine.

"People want it yesterday," Dr. Creinin said. "But the first person who gets harmed... will be the first person to say 'you should have done more research.'"

Dr. Creinin's study is about halfway complete. Very early results showed the drug combination is safe and more than 90 per cent effective.

Another researcher, Dr. Eric Schaff of the University of Rochester School of Medicine, was supportive of Dr. Hausknecht but cautioned he "would be more protected if he had institutional sup-

port, and his patients would be protected with oversight."

Dr. Hausknecht said he would require oversight if he were "some back-alley idiot. But I'm as careful as I possibly can be."

He believes a bad reaction between the drugs is unlikely because they are used four days apart. Still, he said the first time he tried the technique he was "scared stiff." His confidence grew when patient after patient told him "it was a non-event." Other doctors began referring their patients.

Among the 126 women, five required follow-up

surgery to complete the procedure. The typical patient, he said, is over 30, middle-class, a "sophisticated consumer" who may already have undergone a surgical abortion and disliked it. They signed a three-page consent form.

"He is a trailblazer with women's interests at heart, but we think we have to have clinical trials," said Pamela Maraldo, president of the Planned Parenthood Federation of America, which supports abortion rights.

RU486 is not approved for use in the United States, though clinical

trials are expected to begin this fall.

Dr. Hausknecht wouldn't make a patient available for an interview. One of Dr. Schaff's patients, who identified herself only as Kathy, a Rochester business owner, said she preferred the drugs to a surgical abortion she had four years ago.

Cramping was less severe during the drug-induced abortion, which felt "like having my period, more or less. ... You're not in the stirrups being poked and prodded by doctors," Dr. Schaff has given the

drugs to 23 women since July; none required surgical follow-up. The side effects can include diarrhoea, vomiting, cramps and bleeding.

The major drawback: The method can't be used beyond the eighth week of pregnancy.

Dr. Hausknecht charges \$500 for the drug treatment, including an ultrasound exam and blood work. Dr. Schaff said he provides the treatment for \$125 by eliminating the ultrasound. A surgical abortion in New York costs anywhere from \$325 to \$1,000.

Research links dyslexia reading disorder to gene

By Paul Reecer
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Researchers studying three generations of families with reading disorders have found a genetic basis for dyslexia, a problem that keeps millions of people from ever learning to read well.

Experts said the study, published in the journal Science, means that children with inherited reading deficits may be diagnosed early enough in life to help relieve problems at the start of formal schooling.

Researchers at four institutions combined data from two groups of people with reading disabilities, including sets of fraternal twins, to trace the problem to a gene somewhere in Chromosome six. The study is the first to confirm that a complex trait like a reading disorder can be genetically linked.

"We have now narrowed it to a very small part of the human genome," said John Defries, senior author of the

paper and a senior scientist at the Institute for Behavioural Genetics at the University of Colorado in Boulder. "It now should be much easier to find the actual gene."

Reid Lyon, a director of research on learning disabilities at the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, said that the discovery by Dr. Defries and his colleagues is significant.

Dr. Lyon said that about 20 per cent of all children are born with dyslexia, a condition that commonly includes the inability to distinguish separate parts of a word, an important skill in learning to read.

Many never overcome the problem.

"Generally, there's no intervention for a student with dyslexia until about the third grade," which U.S. children reach at the age of eight or nine, Dr. Lyon said. "If schools wait until then, 70 to 80 per cent will have the problem for the rest of their lives. We're losing millions of kids by waiting until the

third grade."

Earlier training, starting at about age five, can increase success to about 50 per cent, he said, but a diagnosis at one or two could be even better.

Dr. Defries said the genetic studies done at the University of Colorado with 50 pairs of fraternal twins, were combined with a study of 19 families at the Centre for Hereditary Communications Disorders in Omaha.

All of the study subjects had average or higher intelligence, but still had some type of reading disorder. The twins were aged eight to 20 and the families studies stretched over three generations, he said. The twin study included one twin with reading problems and one without.

By comparing genes in blood samples taken from the disabled group with genes taken from people without such problems,

the researchers were able to link an abnormality in a segment of Chromosome 6 to the reading problem.

Dr. Defries said that isolating the actual gene could lead to a test that would enable parents to identify newborns who will later need help in combating reading problems.

Lon R. Cardon, a co-author of the study and now a researcher at Stanford University, said the linkage is to a fragment of Chromosome 6 previously been identified as containing genes that contribute to disorders such as hay fever, migraine headaches, asthma, thyroid disease and allergies.

"An earlier study has shown that children with dyslexia have a higher rate of these disorders," said Dr. Cardon.

Science is the journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

WEEKEND CROSSWORD

SPORTING CHANCE
By William Canine

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Diagramless 19 x 19
By Frances Burton

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EU leads the world to hail Jordan-Israel peace treaty

Combined agency dispatches

THE EUROPEAN UNION (EU) welcomed the Israel-Jordan peace treaty on Wednesday and pledged "political and material support" for the peace process throughout the Middle East.

"The EU hopes that the success of Israeli-Jordanian negotiations will encourage constructive progress in the other bilateral tracks of the peace process," a statement said.

"In particular the European Union takes note of the reference in the text of the treaty to the achievements of the union in the development of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe."

"The European Union is ready to share its experience and expertise in this field with all regional parties in the Middle East."

Germany congratulated Israel and Jordan on behalf of the European Union on the signing of the treaty, calling it a "highly significant step on the way to a just and lasting peace throughout the Middle East."

"The EU trusts that soon constructive bilateral relations will develop between Israel and Jordan whose first beneficiaries will be the peoples of both countries and, after a time, regional cooperation as a whole," the foreign ministry said in a statement.

It said the EU hoped the successful conclusion of the deal between Israel and Jordan would also lead to tangible progress in other bilateral negotiations in the framework of the Middle East peace process.

"(The EU) again affirms its readiness to contribute to the success of this process with political and material support," it said.

Germany currently holds the six-month rotating EU

presidency. The Chinese government welcomed the peace treaty saying it would give impetus to the peace process in the Middle East.

Foreign Minister Qian Qichen quoted by the official Xinhua News Agency, said the signing demonstrated that political negotiations were the most effective way to settle conflicts among countries.

"We sincerely hope that the parties concerned will continue their efforts to find a solution to the Middle East issue so as to achieve the all-round and just peace in the region at an earlier date," he was quoted as saying.

The Qatari cabinet said in a statement after its weekly meeting that the signing was "an important step towards achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the Middle East."

"The cabinet expressed hope that peace will be achieved on the Syrian and Lebanese tracks," said the statement, published by the official Qatari News Agency.

Qatari Foreign Minister Hamad Ben Jasssem Al Thani was among 5,000 guests who attended the signing ceremony, which was also witnessed by U.S. President Bill Clinton.

U.N. Security General Boutros Ghali greeted the peace treaty saying it was the "first step" in an extremely slow and difficult process.

"One must accept that this is a first step and that a lot of patience, courage and political savvy is needed to overcome the difficulties that are to come about on the road to a global, total and, we hope, a permanent peace in the Middle East," Dr. Ghali said.

His statement came shortly after he was awarded the Legion of Honour, France's highest civil honour, by French President Francois

Mitterrand for his contribution to the Mideast peace process.

Dr. Ghali served as negotiator for the late Egyptian President Anwar Sadat in the 1970s.

France welcomed the signing of the peace treaty and expressed hope that the accord would strengthen efforts to end other conflicts in the Middle East.

"France welcomes the signature of the treaty between Israel and Jordan which marks a new, decisive step in the historic process of restoring peace to the Middle East," Foreign Ministry spokesman Richard Duque said.

"We hope this progress will be accompanied by equally significant advances in other negotiations under way," he said.

Mr. Duque noted the Jordanian-Israeli treaty, ending 46 years of hostility, closely followed a pact between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation last year.

Libya criticised the peace treaty as weakening the Arab Nation.

"This is a bad day," the Libyan Pan-Arab Unity Ministry said in a statement quoted by the official Libyan news agency JANA.

"It is a weakening of the Arab Nation and a step towards destroying the will of the people to confront (Israel) for the return of their land and their right to an honourable life."

Iran said the signing of the peace treaty will not end hostilities but mark the beginning of difficulties in the region; Iranian state radio said the treaty was being signed "without taking into account the interest of the region and had caused widespread opposition and discontent."

One should not think that the ceremonies today will end conflicts. On the contrary,

the government will face mounting difficulties every day," it said.

President Clinton on Wednesday urged his country's allies to avoid trade with Iran because of its alleged support for "terrorism."

"We are going to ask all of our friends throughout the world to support this, all the people who are friends of peace, the enemies of terrorism, we ask them to recognise that they cannot have it both ways," Mr. Clinton said in Cairo.

"There are things that could be done that are well known to all of you in the form of refraining from having economic relations," he said at a joint press conference here with his Egyptian counterpart Hosni Mubarak.

The Vatican welcomed the signing of the treaty, saying building peace was gaining speed.

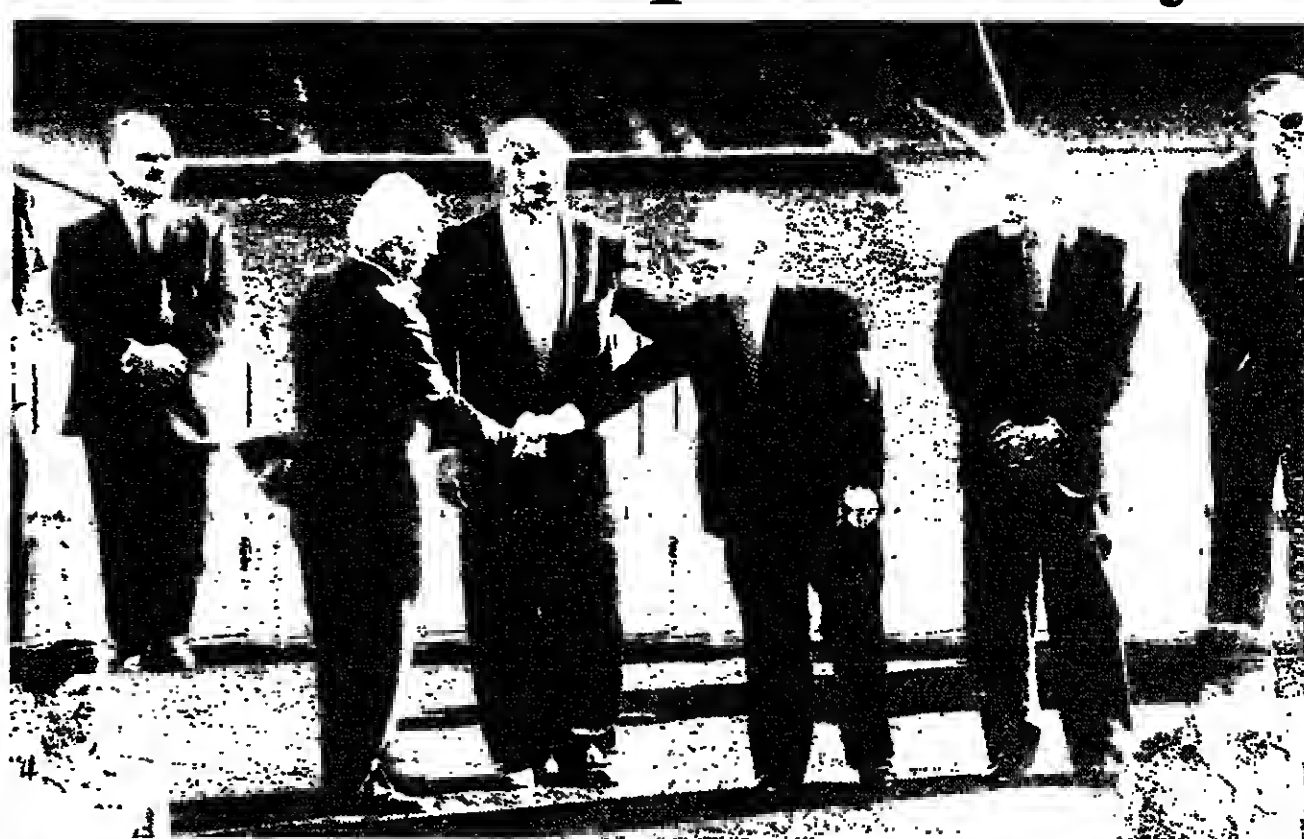
"At each step the plough of peace hits stones that threaten to break its share," the official Vatican paper L'Osservatore Romano commented.

"But powerful hope traces the tracks, and realising that there is life without hate that war is not inevitable and that deadly folly can be overcome ultimately soothed the mind that had been hardened by hate," the paper said.

Guerrillas in South Lebanon fired Katyusha rockets into northern Israel and its self-styled "security zone" inside Lebanon on Wednesday, less than an hour before Israel and Jordan signed the peace treaty.

Security sources said 13 Katyushas were fired towards the Jewish state and its "security zone" and at least four hit the Israeli town of Kiryat Shmona.

Four other rockets fell near the Lebanese frontier village of Houla, while the others slammed near Israeli army positions inside Lebanon.



His Majesty King Hussein shakes hands with Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin at Wednesday's signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty (Photo by Yousef Allan)

Clinton: U.S. will not let Jordan down

(Continued from page 1)

the Middle East there are impassable religious and other obstacles to harmony, (and) that our beliefs in our cultures must somehow inevitably clash. But I believe they are wrong. America refuses to accept that our civilisations must collide."

He let off a strong broadside salvo against fanatics and extremists "who cloak themselves in the rhetoric of religion and nationalism," and said: "They stoke the fire of violence and seek to destroy the progress of peace."

"To them, I say: You will not succeed, you may not succeed, you cannot succeed, you are the past, not the future."

"The people of Jordan on this day, through His Majesty King Hussein, have pledged

themselves to a treaty based on a fundamental law of humanity, that what we have in common is more important than our differences," he said.

Asserting that Moses and the Prophet Mohammad essentially carried the message of coexistence among peoples, the president quoted the Prophet as telling other faithfuls: "There is no argument between us and you, God shall bring us together and unto Him is the homecoming."

"Today, the people of Jordan and the people of Israel have reached across the River Jordan," Mr. Clinton said. "They have chosen life, they have made a homecoming. And tonight we say, thanks be to God," he added.

closing his speech with "Al Hamdulillah" to a standing ovation.

At the outset of the session, Upper House of Parliament Speaker Ahmad Lawzi welcomed Mr. Clinton to the legislature and paid tribute to his very decision to address the Jordanian assembly.

"In addition, this is a clear testimony to what brings us together. Our two countries are linked by friendship that has prospered for over almost half a century, and this friendship was enhanced on a solid basis of common principles, especially the principles of freedom, democracy, pluralism and human rights," Mr. Lawzi said.

"Today, the continued efforts of His Majesty were crowned with success. Today our King had presented to his

people the gift of peace, an invaluable gift. And the most sublime that the people of Jordan offer their dear King in gratitude is a pledge to His Majesty to continue hard work and to maintain true feelings of belonging and profound allegiance," Mr. Lawzi added.

The Senate speaker said the peace treaty would not have been concluded without Mrs. Clinton's support.

Later Wednesday, King Hussein and Queen Noor hosted a dinner banquet in honour of Mr. and Mrs. Clinton.

King Hussein also conferred upon President Clinton the Medal of Al Hussein Ben Ali Sash of the First Order. King Hussein also conferred upon Mrs. Clinton Al Nahda Medal of the First Order.

Samir Barhoum contributed to this report

King: This will become valley of peace

Following are major excerpts from the speech by His Majesty King Hussein before the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty on Wednesday:

"It is with a sense of enormous pride, a sense of fulfillment, that I stand here before you today, together with President Clinton, Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, President Weizman and all our distinguished colleagues and friends..."

"We will always cherish the memory and honour all those who have fallen over the years, from amongst all of our peoples. I believe they are with us on this occasion and at this time as we come together to ensure, God willing, that there will be no more death, no more misery, no more suspicion, no more fear, no more uncertainty of what each day might bring as has been the case in the past."

"Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and I had the honour of signing the Washington

Declaration with President Clinton, our partner and our friend, and we took it upon us... to shepherd the process of negotiations to a successful conclusion. I believe that both of us share in this moment of achievement and pride and relief, for hopefully we have contributed toward a better future of our peoples for all times to come."

"The prime minister of Israel (and) the prime minister of Jordan will shortly ratify the peace treaty between our two countries. This will be witnessed by President Clinton. In a matter of days, we will have completed in Jordan the passage of this peace treaty through the legislature."

"I know it is supported by the overwhelming majority of our people who have learned today of its passage through the Israeli Knesset by an overwhelming majority. These are moments in which we live the past and the future. This great valley in which we stand will become

the valley of peace and when we come together to build it and to make it bloom as never before, when we come to live next to each other as never before, we will be doing so, Israelis and Jordanians together..."

"This is peace with dignity, this is peace with commitment, this is our gift to our peoples and the generations to come."

"It will not be simply a piece of paper ratified by those responsible, blessed by the world. It will be real, as we open our hearts and our minds to each other, as we discover a human face to everything that has happened..."

"All of us have suffered for far too long. President Clinton, you have been our partner, you have been our friend, you have given us your support, together with the administration of the United States of America, you are at the helm during these historic moments. We will always remember the warmth

of your welcome to us both in Washington and the warmth of the welcome of the people of the United States of America with which they received our news and lauded our achievements."

"No one will ever forget this day, and in particular we will always remember the fact that you personally came to be with us here on this most happy of occasions at the end of a chapter of darkness and the opening of a book of light."

"God bless you and give you every future success and maybe the world needs some good examples..."

"Behind us here you see Eilat and Aqaba, the way we have lived over the years, in such close proximity, unable to meet, to visit each other, to develop this beautiful part of the world. No more, as we look into the future beyond this point with determination, with hope, with commitment. We survived the hard times."

Clinton: People must make peace real

Following are major excerpts from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin's speech before the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty:

"Happy holiday, happy holiday to the people of Israel, happy holiday to the people of Jordan. From this podium, I look around and I see the Arava. I see only a desert. There is almost no life here. There is no water, no wells and not a spring, only mine fields."

"Such were the realities between Israel and Jordan during the last 47 years. A desert, not one green leaf, no tree, not even a single flower."

"There comes a time when there is a need to be strong and to make courageous decisions, to overcome the minefields, the barrenness between our two people."

"We have known many days of sorrow. Bereavement unites us as does bravery. We honour those who sacrificed their lives."

"We both must draw on the strengths of our great spiritual resources to forgive the anguish, to clear the minefields that divided us... and to supplant it with fields of plenty."

"For nearly two generations, desolation pervaded the hearts of our two peoples."

The time has come not only to dream of a new future, but to realise it."

"Leaders should clear the path. The road itself must be paved by both people. I don't believe we would have reached this great moment without the desire for peace in the hearts of both people of the soldiers, the truck drivers, teachers, little children."

"Our generation and the next, we are the ones who will transform this barren place into a fertile oasis..."

"It is not only our states that are making peace with each other today, not only our nations that are shaking hands in peace."

"You and I, Your Majesty, are making peace here, are opening the peace of soldiers and the peace of friends."

"A dawn has broken this moment and a new day has begun. New life came into this world. Babies were born in Jerusalem and babies were born in Amman. To the mother of the Jordanian newborn, a blessed day to you. To the mother of the Israeli newborn, a blessed day to you."

"The peace that was born today gives us all the hope that the children born today will never know war between us and their mothers will know no sorrow."

Rabin: Time has come to realise dream

Following are major excerpts from U.S. President Bill Clinton's speech before the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty on Wednesday:

"We celebrate the history and the faith of Jordanians and Israelis. But we break the chains of the past that for too long have kept you shackled in the shadows of strife and suffering."

"We celebrate the efforts of great leaders who saw the bright horizon of this dawn even while the darkness lingered. This vast bleak desert hides great signs of life. Today we see the proof of it for

peace between Jordan and Israel is no longer a mirage. It is real. It will take root in this soil. It will grow to great heights and shelter generations to come."

"I say to the people of Israel and Jordan: Now you must make this peace real, to turn no man's land into every man's home, to take down the barbed wire, to remove the deadly mines, to help the wounds of war to heal. Open your borders, open your hearts. Peace is more than an agreement on paper. It is feeling, it is activity, it is devotion."

"The forces of terror will

try to hold you back. Already they take deadly aim at the future of peace and in their zeal to kill hope and keep hatred alive they would deny all that peace can bring to your children. We cannot, we must not, we will not let them succeed."

"Here in the great rift valley you have bridged the tragic rift that separated your people for too long. Here in this region which is the home of not only both your faiths but mine I say: 'Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall inherit the earth.'"

Mr. Clinton hailed King Hussein, whose grandfather,

King Abdullah, was assassinated in 1951 for his pro-peace stand. "Today your day has come. Truly you have fulfilled your grandfather's legacy," he said.

"How bravely you have shouldered that burden and carried that dream."

Turning to Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, a former chief-of-staff of his country's armed forces, Mr. Clinton said: "We salute you. You have won the greatest victory of all."

The peace treaty gives "hope of life after the siege" to all Israelis, said the president.

Combined agency dispatches

U.S. PRESIDENT Bill Clinton said on Wednesday he was satisfied that Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat would make good on a pledge to fight militant Palestinian groups to preserve peace with Israel.

Speaking at a news conference after a meeting with Mr. Arafat and Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak in Cairo, Mr. Clinton also said he would lead an international effort to help Israel and the PLO move into the next phase of the peace process.

"Chairman Arafat said he would continue to do all he could to combat terrorism, specifically Hamas but other groups as well, and I am satisfied with the response he gave and I believe he will attempt to implement it," Mr. Clinton said.

"He understands that Hamas is his enemy now. Once you become a partner in the peace process you have to fight for peace..."

At a photo session at the beginning of their meeting the PLO leader was asked how he would choose. "My choice is the peace, the peace of the brave," he replied.

Later, Marwan Kanafani, Mr. Arafat's spokesman, said Mr. Arafat made it clear to Mr. Clinton that he chose peace over aligning himself with Hamas. "Arafat told Clinton that he and the Palestinians chose peace as a strategic option long ago and it's irreversible as long as they are in the framework of the U.N. resolutions and achieving Palestinian rights," he said.

"I felt we got a very firm and unambiguous response... I am satisfied with the response he gave," Mr. Clinton said.

"He understands clearly now that Hamas is the enemy now," Mr. Clinton said. State Department spokesman Michael McCurry said it was the "first official meeting" between a U.S. president and the Palestinian leader.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Arafat talked briefly on Sept. 13, 1993, when the PLO signed the declaration of principles

on Palestinian autonomy with Israel.

Mr. Clinton met Mr. Mubarak and Mr. Arafat after a post-midnight visit to the grave of assassinated Egyptian leader Anwar Sadat.

Mr. Arafat told reporters before his meeting with Mr. Clinton "my choice is the peace of the brave" even if it provoked a rupture with Hamas.

"Chairman Arafat started the discussions himself with his desire to combat the terrorist groups, with his willingness to do all that he could," Mr. Clinton said at the press conference, which was not attended by Mr. Arafat.

"We will admit that it is impossible to guarantee a 100 per cent success in any effort. Even in the U.S. we are not 100 per cent successful in combatting organised crime. What we want is a 100 per cent effort," Mr. Clinton said.

"There has been an increasing effort in the last several weeks on the part of Chairman Arafat and the (self-rule) authorities in the territories to do what they can on this problem and I think it will continue to increase," he said.

"Terrorists must not be allowed, must not be allowed to intimidate the people of the region into abandoning the peace process," Mr. Clinton said.

Mr. Clinton encouraged Arafat to be as brave in his handling of Hamas as he was in signing a self-rule accord with his former Israeli arch-enemy and said "terrorism" should not be allowed to derail the peace process.

"We agreed that the same courage is needed to fight the enemies of peace as Chairman Arafat showed in making peace. The enemies of peace are desperate but they must not defeat the hopeful forces of the future," Mr. Clinton said.

"Terror must not be allowed to intimidate the people of this region in abandoning the peace process. At this moment of opportunity those who perpetuate violence cause the greatest threat to the Palestinian people and all Arab people," he

said.

Mr. Arafat has come under immense pressure over the past few weeks to crack down on Hamas, which has carried out several attacks against Israelis, including a bomb attack on a bus in Tel Aviv that killed 22 people and the suicide bomber last week.

But Palestinians said Mr. Arafat would refrain from doing so, fearing such a clampdown would spark internal strife.

Mr. Arafat pleaded for urgent funds to back his Palestinian self-rule authority in Gaza and the Jericho enclave and bolster his authority against militants who oppose peace.

Mr. Clinton reiterated the need for Palestinian accountability and institution-building as a U.S. condition for releasing funds to the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to build its infrastructure.

"I told Chairman Arafat that as the (Palestinian) administration starts to set up a system for its revenues, the United States will lead an international effort to support the Israeli-PLO agreement on early empowerment in the West Bank."

Mr. Mubarak, who has intervened several times to bring the PLO and Israel closer in times of crisis in their peace negotiations, said Mr. Arafat was eager to end Hamas violence but that both Palestinians and Israelis must work together.

Mr. Clinton said he also discussed with Mr. Arafat the need to keep moving on a joint front to implement fully

the PLO-Israeli peace accord, move towards holding Palestinian polls which would pave the way for the redeployment of Israeli troops in the West Bank and expand Palestinian authority in the area.

The meetings were held in the 400-room government Quheh Palace where Mr. Clinton spent the night. Blue-helmeted soldiers stood guard outside the opulent limestone structure that was built in 1872.

A quick-footed financial organisation would respond better to the problems of development in the Middle East than a complex development bank, the president of the German central Bundesbank Hans Eitelmeier said in occupied Jerusalem on Tuesday.

Mr. Arafat, who returned to Gaza late Wednesday across the Egyptian border of Rafah by car, made no comment on his talks with Mr. Clinton.

Ten Palestinian factions in Syria and Lebanon echoed the chorus of opposition to the treaty, saying no pact should be signed until Israel withdrew from all Arab land. They proclaimed a day of mourning and ordered a protest strike in Lebanese refugee camps, which shut down schools, shops, cafes and other businesses.

From Iran, a commentary on state-run Tehran Radio reiterated the government view that the pact is a "hurdled initiative to mortgage part of its territory to the Zionist enemy."

Hamas issues new warning

THE ISLAMIC Resistance Movement, Hamas, warned Wednesday that it would strike at Israel "worldwide," in an open letter to U.S. President Bill Clinton on the day he attended the signing of the Israeli-Jordanian peace treaty.

The hardline Palestinian group said in a statement received in Damascus that "threats" from Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin "do not frighten us, because our supporters are ready to re-

spond to these attacks worldwide."

"Rabin takes responsibility for widening the battlefield, although we wanted to restrict clashes to Palestinian territory," Hamas said. The Hamas statement, which began with the words "Mr. President," went on: "To attack Hamas is to attack all the Arab and Muslim people, and this will have negative consequences for all those on the side of evil."

Asia benefits from capital inflow, 'synchronised recovery' of G-7

MANILA (AFP) — Asia will lead the world in brisk economic growth next year as the industrialised world recovers from recession, and the region will continue to get the bulk of capital inflow from developed countries, experts said Wednesday.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) officials told an international conference in the Philippines that the world's real gross domestic product (GDP) output growth would be 3.1 per cent this year and 3.6 per cent in 1995, compared with 1.7 per cent in 1992 and 2.3 per cent last year.

The World Bank said real GDP among Group of Seven (G-7) industrialised countries would grow 2.5 per cent in 1994, 2.8 per cent next year and 2.9 per cent in 1995, while Asian economies would grow by 7.6 per cent, 7.2 per cent and 7.0 per cent respectively.

East Asia, which includes China, would top the growth table with 8.9 per cent, 8.1 per cent and 7.6 per cent over the same period.

"We in the World Bank see that this situation will persist for 10 years," World Bank representative Shigeru Otsubo said.

However, a World Bank study warned of a possible "boom and bust scenario" if higher than anticipated growth in the United States and Germany led to a monetary crunch because of inflationary pressures, "which in turn could cause a slowdown in economic activity in 1996."

The impact on Japan, a major trading partner of the two industrial giants, would intensify the shock waves, which the bank said would hit Latin America hardest, the Middle East and Africa also suffering.

Even then East Asia would only suffer a "modest drop in output," it said.

Mr. Otsubo said the "synchronised recovery" of the G-7 countries, particularly the United States, Germany and Japan would account for the rosy outlook for 1995.

Senior IMF economist David Coe said "large margins of economic slack remain in many countries" but there was a "resilience of growth in the developing countries as a whole" in the last three years that "has been one of the most encouraging features" of the global outlook.

He attributed this to the recent growth in net capital inflows following a period of weakness due to the debt crisis. The total to developing countries averaged almost \$100 billion a year between 1990 and 1993 compared with \$10 billion a year between 1983 and 1989.

Most of these inflows were in the form of direct foreign investment and are non-debt, but its distribution was uneven across regions and countries.

"In absolute terms, inflows tend to be concentrated in the largest economies, such as China and India, as well as successful middle-income countries," Mr. Coe told the conference.

"China is sucking all the investments out of South East Asia," said Asian Development Bank assistant chief economist Malcolm Dowling. He warned that China and Vietnam would dominate foreign investment in Asia at the expense of the rest of the sub-region.

Mr. Otsubo said East Asia should be able to withstand a downturn in the developed countries. If the G-7 did well, its exports to these countries also improved, and if there were a downturn, the region would become a more attractive investment area.

"Whichever way the world goes, East Asia receives the purchasing power," Mr. Otsubo said.

He noted that despite its active export sector, most of China's growth would be accounted for by the domestic sector in the short term.

"What really makes the Asian miracle is high rates of domestic savings and investment," Mr. Dowling said.

OECD/WTO: Trans-Atlantic clash seen over world economic command posts

PARIS (AFP) — The United States and the European Union (EU) seem headed for a showdown in the next few weeks over who should be at the controls in two top international economic bodies, senior European diplomats said.

They saw a possible "open confrontation" by end-November over the top posts in the World Trade Organisation (WTO), due to start operating in Geneva next January, and in the Paris-based Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

Asian countries, including Japan, now also appear eager to vie for positions reflecting their rising weight in the world economy, they said.

In the WTO, the trans-Atlantic row over the choice of the WTO's first director general could be complicated by Asia joining the fray, Geneva and Paris diplomats said.

Japan and other Pacific region countries now support a South Korean candidate against the Americans' favourite, Mexico's outgoing President Carlos Salinas de Gortari, and Italy's former trade minister Renato Ruggiero, strongly backed by the EU.

In the OECD, the U.S. and the EU still remain at loggerheads over who should

be the organisation's next secretary general, the sources said.

They said France and Canada are making a joint effort to secure a compromise deal for their respective candidates, Jean-Claude Paye, the French incumbent, and Canadian ex-minister Donald Johnston.

The proposed deal would allow Mr. Paye to stay on for two years, with Mr. Johnston succeeding him for a full five-year mandate.

Lobbying and horse-trading for both posts are going on at the "highest levels," a European diplomat commented.

"What we see is a battle for influence on the working of the two institutions well into the next century," a well-placed official said.

The U.S. appears particularly well aware of their strategic importance as major links in the network of multilateral bodies that manage the world economy, he said.

EU officials have accused Washington of encouraging the candidacies of Mr. Salinas for the WTO and Mr. Johnston for the OECD to "keep a handle" on the two bodies.

A review of the multilateral system was launched this summer on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the Bretton Woods conference,

which set up the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank.

The review, reflecting dramatic changes on the world economic scene — including the emergence of Asian and Latin American nations as major players and the market revolution in formerly communist states — will be in focus at next year's summit of Group of Seven leaders in Halifax, Canada.

Diplomats here recognise there is no formal link between the choice of the heads of the OECD and the WTO, which is to take over from the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), as the body overseeing world trade.

"But if the WTO job goes to Salinas, we must have a European at the OECD," one European ambassador asserted.

Geneva diplomats said Tuesday the latest soundings by GATT council chairman Andraz Szepesi of Hungary point to a three-way stand-off over the WTO post.

They said Mr. Ruggiero secured the support of about one-third of the votes of 90 GATT members which responded, out of a total of 125.

Mr. Salinas obtained just over one-quarter and South Korea's Trade Minister Choi Su Kim just under one-

quarter of the informal votes. A consensus is required to name the WTO chief and a decision must be made by early December.

Another sounding is to be completed by Nov. 7, with each member supposed to name two candidates by order of preference.

If the deadlock still continues, the focus might shift to a compromise candidate. New Zealand trade official Philip Bordon and former Swedish premier Carl Bildt are among names cited.

At the OECD, the outlook is equally unclear. When Mr. Paye, backed by the EU for another term, left his post at end-September, Swedish ambassador Staffan Sjöbom was named a caretaker until Nov. 30, an implicit deadline.

The United States, which blocked a further term for Mr. Paye, has still to respond to the proposed Franco-Canadian compromise solution.

Some European diplomats meanwhile criticise Paris and Ottawa for not withdrawing their candidacies.

"They have put national prestige ahead, preventing some very good people from showing interest," a senior diplomat said, citing Mr. Ruggiero and Henning Christophersen, the outgoing Danish EU commission vice-president, as examples.

Russia sees economic decline in '95

MOSCOW (R) — The Russian economy, already reeling from three years of market reforms, will contract further in 1995, but inflation will slow, according to official documents presented to parliament.

An economics ministry forecast said gross domestic product (GDP) — a broad measure of goods and services — would contract by six or eight per cent next year. Services, long-neglected in the old, centralised Soviet economy, would continue to grow.

Russia's GDP contracted 18 per cent in 1992, the year the country launched a reform programme designed to create a market economy similar to that in the West.

But the situation is no longer quite so dire and GDP fell a much lower 12 per cent in 1993. The report said out-

put had stopped falling in some sectors.

"This bears witness to the first signs of stabilisation, or at least to the basis for stabilisation," it said.

A finance ministry document said Russia expected to bring inflation down to a year-on-year 27 or 30 per cent next year, after consumer price rises of 180 per cent in 1994, 840 per cent in 1993 and over 2,000 per cent in 1992.

The two documents were released as background to the debate on Russia's 1995 budget, already agreed by the government in outline form, but still far from parliamentary approval.

"The budget is a serious piece of work and a lot of thought has gone into it," said one Western economist. "Initial impressions are that — at the very least — they

are trying."

Western experts say Russia must make controlling inflation its top economic priority, and they argue that other elements of economic life will fall into place if price rises can be slowed.

"Current levels are not low inflation," one economist said. "Russia cannot sit back and say it has already brought inflation down a lot and it has done enough."

Russia's monthly inflation rose to 7.7 per cent in September, up from 4.5 per cent in August, but still well below rates around 20 per cent at the start of the year.

Economists say the October rate could be as high as 15 per cent, pushed up by a steep ruble fall last week which drove the cost of imported goods sharply higher.

Acting central bank chairman Tatyana Paramonova

told ITAR-TASS news agency the bank would intervene on foreign exchange markets to protect the ruble.

She said the central bank's tasks were to "create a modern banking system which would correspond to the scale of the country" and to improve the settlement system and make more effective use of monetary policy instruments.

The budget, which envisages a deficit of 8.8 per cent of GDP, is certain to face bitter opposition from a series of special interest groups, ranging from farms to firms and the military.

Interfax News Agency Monday quoted Defence Minister Pavel Grachev as saying the military share of the budget was "clearly insufficient."

Finance ministry officials have said they will use "non-inflationary means" to close the budget gap.

This includes international loans and domestic securities. The finance ministry has already tapped domestic security markets,

China's private sector booming

BEIJING (AFP) — The rapid growth of China's private sector has shown no sign of abating this year, with the number of private firms standing at 528,000 as of June, a 37 per cent rise from the same month last year, a survey has said.

The nationwide joint survey by the All-China Federation of Industry and Commerce (ACFIC) and the Beijing-based Horizon Market Survey and Analysis Co. put the number of people employed in the sector at 5.01 million, up 34 per cent from June last year.

Total registered capital of all private firms topped 104.1 billion yuan (\$12 billion), the Xinhua news agency cited the survey as saying.

As well as swift growth in the number of firms, the survey showed that more than one third of existing private companies are significantly expanding and diversifying their operations.

Many are launching joint ventures with overseas partners, establishing enterprise groups or engaging in undertakings on a share-holding basis, the survey said. The majority of private

sector growth is the tertiary sector, especially the service and entertainment industries.

Despite the sector's apparent prosperity, many private enterprises included in the survey complained of difficulties in acquiring loans, technical personnel, information services and good working conditions.

In a report released in May, the ACFIC explicitly accused the government of being prejudiced against the private businessman who have been hard hit by a nationwide credit squeeze.

Dollar seen weak without intervention, rate hike

TOKYO (R) — A combination of concerted intervention by central banks and U.S. interest rate hikes is the only salvation for the ailing dollar, Tokyo dealers have said.

Even if those conditions are met, some expect the dollar to hit a new post-World War II low against the yen, which they say is necessary to form a market consensus that the dollar has finally bottomed out.

"I don't think the 96.40 yen marked on Tuesday is the end of the story," a senior dealer at Mitsubishi Bank said.

"The dollar needs to fall to a new low for it to clear its slate before joint intervention jolts it up again," he added.

The U.S. trade deficit and confusion about U.S. policy in recent weeks has plagued

the dollar.

A combination of joint intervention and U.S. interest rate hikes could support the dollar, but the Nov. 8 U.S. mid-term elections are expected to complicate the timing of both intervention and rate hikes, dealers said.

This is because interest rate hikes could be politically unpopular, and a sustained campaign of intervention by the U.S. central bank could draw domestic political criticism as being expensive and wasteful.

"The Federal Reserve (Fed) will have its hands tied until the mid-term elections," a senior U.S. bank dealer said.

As the elections near, he expected the market to sell dollars because of a belief that U.S. President Bill Clinton's Democratic Party will

lose ground in the polls.

"The Fed dislikes political factors affecting the currency market, so it may call for joint intervention," he said.

"If central banks intervene, the dollar could recover somewhat," Masamichi

Tachi, manager of treasury sales at Midland Bank, said.

Hiking U.S. interest rates by 0.75 per cent at the Federal Open Market Committee (FOMC) meeting on Nov. 15 would help the dollar, he said.

HOROSCOPE

FORECAST FOR FRIDAY OCTOBER 26, 1994

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

GENERAL TENDENCIES: Accepting your friends as they are instead of trying to change them today will work out best for you in the long run. Stay within your budget and avoid tricky individuals who request your support.

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) A fine new idea in the morning can bring you quite a good deal of success in the future. This is a good day to plan a trip with your mate.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) Some foolish thought could get you in trouble in the morning. Try to please your mate by agreeing with some demand which is revealed.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Patch up some misunderstanding with a fellow associate and have a better understanding in the future. Think logically about an idea.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You have a fine idea in the morning about how to be more efficient at your occupation. Take care not to lose your temper.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Use your intuition about the kind of amusements you want to enjoy with good friends. Come to an understanding with your mate about events.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) Don't let a foolish remark from a family member disturb your plans for having more harmony at home. Dress well this evening.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You get an unexpected communication in the morning which can spark your activities. Take a short trip with your loved ones to see people.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) After breakfast, you get a fine idea for improving your lot in life. A very successful individual also gives good advice to you.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) That personal idea you get in the morning should include others as well. Tonight, join an interesting group and have a fine time.

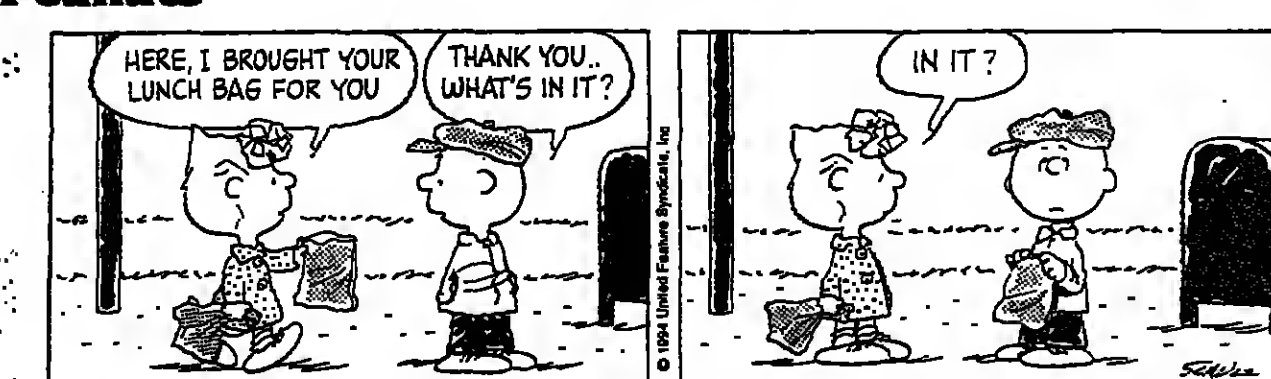
CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Confide your ambitions to your mate and gain support for them. Then enjoy some recreation together which you can both participate in.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) A friend can give you fine ideas for making your personal life as you want it to be. Be gregarious and bring out your finest talents.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Listen to ideas of one who is important in your vocation and benefit from them. Take it easy tonight and rest up for the weekend.

Birthstone of October: Opal Tourmaline

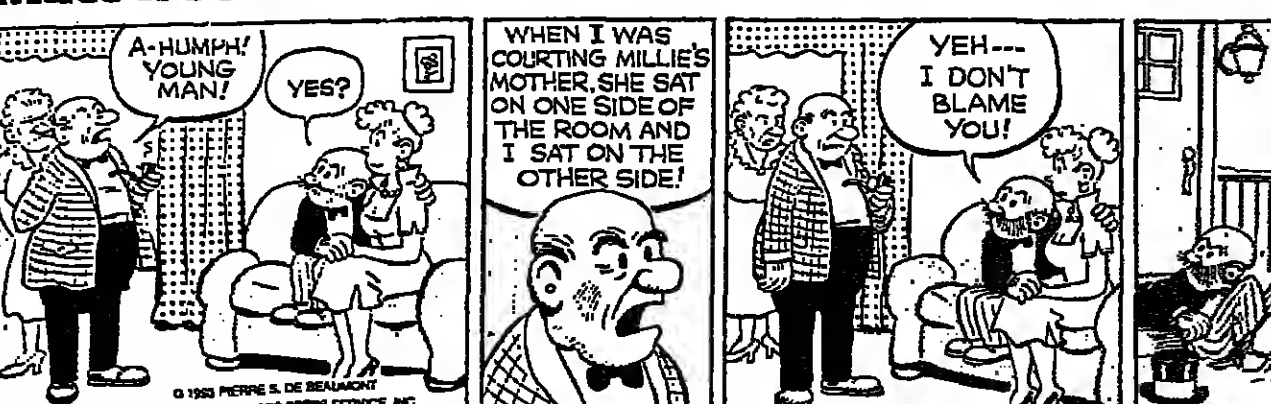
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



THE BETTER HALF

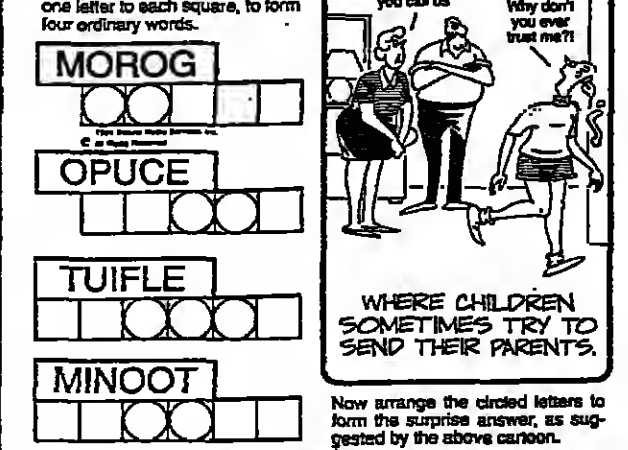
By Glasbergen



"My very first girlfriend told me I was cute as a bug. Two weeks later she called an exterminator!"

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Answer here: ON A (Answers tomorrow)
Saturday's Jumbles: BISON GUISE SIMILE SPYHON
Answer: What the donut baker gave his son when he retired — THE HOLE BUSINESS

THE Daily Crossword by Betty Jorgensen



Financial Markets

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.6860	0.6900
Sterling Pound	1.1240	1.1296
Deutsche Mark	0.4613	0.4636
Swiss Franc	0.5537	0.5565
French Franc	0.1345	0.1355
Japanese Yen	0.7103	0.7159
Dutch Guilder	0.4116	0.4137
Swedish Krona	0.0451	0.0453
Italian Lira	0.0451	0.0453
Belgian Franc	0.0451	0.0453

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.6130	1.6310
Lebanese Lira	0.040475	0.040525
Saudi Riyal	0.1828	0.1851
Kuwaiti Dinar	2.3170	2.3710
Qatari Riyal	0.1882	0.1912
Egyptian Pound	0.2000	0.2000
Omani Riyal	1.7800	1.8010
UAE Dirham	0.1867	0.1891
Greek Drachma	0.2755	0.3150
Cypriot Pound	1.4445	1.5325

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London Foreign Exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

U.S. \$1.00 costs	1.3480/90	Canadian dollar
	1.4969/79	Deutschemarks
	1.6779/89	Dutch guilders
	1.2506/16	Swiss francs
	30.82/86	Belgian francs
	5.1245/95	French francs
	1530.4/1.9	Italian lire
	97.01/11	Japanese yen
	7.0647/47	Swedish crowns
	6.5087/37	Norwegian crowns
	5.8430/80	Danish crowns
One sterling	51.6325/35	
One ounce of gold	\$388.70/389.20	

Hong Kong world's best city for business, Fortune says

NEW YORK (AP) — Landlords charge outrageous rents, streets teem with traffic and the takeover by communist China looms less than three years away. But Hong Kong is the best place in the world for business.

So says Fortune magazine, which crowned Britain's capital as the most attractive commercial center.

New York City, once a symbol of U.S. urban decay, ranks No. 2 in Fortune's list, helped by its pre-eminence as a Mecca of the information age — advertising, television and other media conglomerates.

The ranking appears in Fortune's Nov. 14 issue, due out next Monday.

Multinational trade agreements and growing markets in the Pacific rim, South America and eastern Europe required a worldwide appraisal of business centers.

The twice-monthly business glossy said in explaining its latest variation on the list theme.

That approach put Hong Kong on top, since it adjoins China, the world's fastest-growing economy and biggest single consumer market with more than one billion people.

The British colony's superior telecommunications, shipping facilities and low business taxes also make it the best place for entry to the rest of Asia's fast-growing economies, Fortune said.

Never mind that Hong Kong property owners charge some of the highest commercial rents anywhere: more than \$96 a square foot annually (\$1,000 a square metre), triple the New York rate. Never mind that Hong Kong is one of the most congested urban areas, with nearly six million people on a spit of land and adjoining islands on the border of

southern China's Guangdong province.

Most important, Fortune reasoned, the impending takeover of Hong Kong when Britain's lease expires in 1997 isn't causing much anxiety. On the contrary, Hong Kong is now seen as the best steppingstone into China, with an intricate web of business and personal connections unmatched anywhere else.

Officially, the Chinese government has guaranteed that Hong Kong's capitalist system will survive for at least 50 years after the takeover in June 1997.

In what might be considered another unlikely winner, New York took the No. 2 spot despite a reputation for high taxes, crime and crowds. Fortune, which is headquartered in New York, said the Big Apple is getting friendlier.

Mayor Rudolph Giuliani has cracked down on panhandlers and other nuisances. He is dedicated to keeping corporate giants in the city and has funnelled money into Broadway and other cultural centres.

Third-ranked London, which Fortune called "the unchallenged financial and communications heart of Europe," also boasts a thriving arts scene and safe streets.

Home to CNN Television, Coca-Cola and the 1996 summer Olympics, Atlanta earned Fortune's No. 4 spot. No. 5 Chicago remains an essential transportation centre with the world's largest airport and rail links to both coasts.

Sixth-ranked Singapore offers lower rents and a better quality of life than Hong Kong, Fortune noted. With its proximity to China and other Asia markets, it could "cash in as a discount Hong Kong."

Fortune highlighted

Toronto's chance to benefit from the North American Free Trade Agreement, San Francisco's world-class universities and Frankfurt's dominance of European banking in naming the seventh, eighth and ninth-ranked cities. Miami, cited for its strong ties to Latin American commerce, rounded out the top ten.

Twenty other U.S. metro areas earned spots in the top fifth, although they weren't ranked: Baltimore, Boston, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Detroit, Houston, Kansas City, Los Angeles, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Philadelphia, Phoenix, Pittsburgh, Portland, Ore., St. Louis, San Diego, Seattle, Tampa and Washington.

Outside the United States, Fortune listed Barcelona, Beijing, Berlin, Bombay, Brussels, Buenos Aires, Dubai, Geneva, Jakarta, Jed-

World securities regulators agree to address problem of 'uncooperative' markets

TOKYO (AFP) — World securities regulators have agreed to address the problem of "uncooperative" markets, without naming those which fail to comply with accepted rules.

The International Organisation of Securities Commissions (IOSCO) also agreed to admit five new members from Macedonia, Zambia, Luxembourg, Brazil and Japan, boosting its membership to 115.

The main achievement of the conference, the first held in Asia, was the adoption of a resolution on basic principles for high regulatory standards and mutual cooperation and assistance.

Securities and futures authorities still faced obstacles in obtaining necessary information from under-regulated and uncooperative jurisdictions," the resolution said.

"When such information is unavailable because it is located in an under-regulated and uncooperative jurisdiction, enforcement efforts can be compromised," it said, without naming which countries were concerned.

The IOSCO executive called for all members of the 19-year-old association, which groups securities commissions from around 70 countries, to prepare reports assessing their ability to cooperate with foreign regulators.

"This resolution constitutes a clear statement by IOSCO of its intention to monitor closely the ability of its members to obtain information from other jurisdictions and to take appropriate steps to improve the situation," the group said in its final communique.

Jean Saint-Geours, the president of France's Commission des Operations de Bourse and outgoing chairman of the IOSCO technical committee, refused to identify which jurisdictions were being targeted by the group.

"The whole approach is not to pillory or label any specific market with some kind of reputation which would put it beyond the pale of the international community," he told a news conference.

But Mr. Saint-Geours said "guidance notes will be circulated" after the reports are received by the IOSCO secretariat. "We hope some of these markets will be less uncooperative after that," he added.

Abu Dhabi plans 3 new industrial zones

ABU DHABI (R) — Abu Dhabi, a major oil producer, plans to set up three industrial free zones including one focusing on petrochemicals, a senior industrial official has said.

"We are encouraging all investors from the United Arab Emirates and abroad... as foreigners can hold up to 49 per cent (of any UAE venture)" said Essa Al Ateek, director-general of Abu Dhabi's General Industry Corp (GIC).

Abu Dhabi is the largest of seven members of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and produces most of its oil.

The project, still at the planning stage, envisages one zone near Abu Dhabi city, one in the city of Al Ain and one in the west of the emirate near the oil complex at Ruweis.

Mr. Ateek said it was not yet clear how much the zones would cost or what kind of industrial projects could be set up there, although the Ruweis zone will be for petrochemicals.

He said Abu Dhabi currently had three industrial areas.

Like other Arab Gulf states, the UAE is keen to diversify its economy, away from reliance on fluctuating oil prices.

The UAE emirate of Dubai has set up a large industrial zone at Jebel Ali which includes a big aluminium smelter.

The zones would be given infrastructure and investors helped with finance by the GIC, Mr. Ateek said. The zones would streamline investment bureaucracy, creating a "one-stop shop."

The GCC, owned by Abu Dhabi, runs about eight factories including cement plants and flour mills and also licences non-oil industrial projects in the emirate, Mr. Ateek said.

The UAE does not have direct taxes. Mr. Ateek said imports and exports by factories in the zone would be free of the four per cent customs tariff charged on some goods since August.

Mr. Ateek said GIC would cooperate in the western zone with Abu Dhabi National Oil Company (ADNOC), which runs an oil refinery at Ruweis. Local press reports have said a billion-dollar petrochemicals plant is being planned for the area.

"If ADNOC are going to build a big petrochemicals plant then GIC won't. We're not going to compete with them. But there will be space for GIC to set up some small projects," he said.

Africa to triple coffee income in 94/95

ABIDJAN (R) — African countries could earn up to \$3 billion from coffee in 1994/95 against \$900 million last year after a huge rise in the world price, the secretary general of the Inter African Coffee Organisation (IACO), Arega Worku, said.

But in a statement to mark the creation of the Association of Coffee Producing Countries (ACPC) a year ago he said a fall in African output had limited the benefits of the price hike.

"African production fell by 35 per cent between 1991 and 1993 mainly due to the discouragement of farmers by poor prices and political problems in a number of countries," he said.

Robusta coffee had risen from \$900 a tonne in April 1993 to \$4,000 in July 1994 as a producers' export retention scheme and two frosts in Brazil cut supply, he said.

He said speculation and activity had caused volatility in the market since then despite a prolonged drought in Brazil, which added to the frost damage.

"This volatility is likely to continue around an indicator price of 200 cents a pound (\$4,400 a tonne)," he said.

Last Friday the International Coffee Organisation indicator prices for robusta and Arabica were around 171 and 201 cents a pound respectively.

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Africa hints World Cup boycott could be last resort

NEW YORK (Agencies) — Africa confederation president Issa Hayatou hinted at a boycott of African nations if they are not given two extra World Cup finals places.

Hayatou told AFP Tuesday he was determined to obtain the extra places for the World Cup finals in France in 1998.

But Hayatou warned repercussions could be serious if Africa did not have their way. He said if FIFA's executive committee ruled in Europe's favour, "anything could happen."

Hayatou implied there could be a boycott of African nations, without saying it directly. In 1966, Africa decided to boycott the play-off against Asia in order to have the right to be represented in England.

He said the increase of teams in the World Cup finals from 24 to 32 countries should allow world football to rebalance the football map in the sport's showpiece event.

"Our position, which we have given to FIFA, has always been the same — we want two extra places to bring up the number of African representatives up to five," Hayatou said.

For Hayatou, it was out of

the question that Europe have 16 teams in the next finals.

"To our great surprise, the Europeans want three extra places, not counting hosts France, which would bring them half of the total. It's unthinkable and a total injustice."

"We cannot accept that, particularly as the decision taken will remain for a very long time and therefore influence the future of Africa."

Nevertheless, on the day before his meeting with FIFA President Joao Havelange and the other confederation presidents, Hayatou remained confident.

"It is imperative things change. Africa has many teams which would do very well in a World Cup finals," he added, referring to countries such as Morocco, Algeria, Egypt, Nigeria, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Cameroon, Senegal, Zaire, Zambia, and South Africa.

"For me, it is symptomatic of every World Cup that Africa presents new teams which play almost always very well. That proves we are under represented in regard to our value."

From now on numerous meetings take place.

On Tuesday evening, Africa, Asia and Concacaf were due to meet. Wednesday morning, the presidents of all the confederations meet Joao Havelange to hammer out an agreement, with a final decision to be made by FIFA's executive committee meeting Thursday.

FIFA General Secretary Sepp Blatter predicted Tuesday that Europe will get at least two more spots in the 1998 World Cup and the other regional federations will gain at least one additional spot.

This year, Europe got 13 spots, South America and Africa got three each, and Asia and the North and Central American and Caribbean regions (Concacaf) got two each. The final spot was determined in a playoff among teams from South America, Concacaf and Oceania and was won by Argentina.

Blatter said the proposal being discussed would give Europe 15 spots (including France as the host nation); South America (including Brazil as the defending champion) four; Africa four; a combined Asia-Oceania region four; and Concacaf three.

He said the final three

spots, under this plan, were being fought for by Europe, South America and Africa. "Europe would like to have 16, South America would like to have five and Africa would like to have five, so there is one too much," Blatter said.

FIFA's executive committee, which will have the final say, also is considering a slight change in the allocation of spots in the 16-team Olympic tournament. Currently, Europe gets five berths, while Africa, Concacaf and Asia-Oceania get three each and South America two. The change would shift Oceania's playoff for a berth: Instead of opposing Asia, it will play Concacaf.

The executive committee also will consider lifting the ban on international play by Yugoslavia. The ban, imposed in the spring of 1992, prevented Yugoslavia from competing at the 1992 European championship.

Concerning the 1996 Olympics, Blatter said FIFA told U.S. officials that Legion Field in Birmingham, Ala., would have to convert to a grass surface for the tournament, and the famous hedges at Sanford Stadium in Athens, Georgia would have

to be cut.

Also, U.S. Soccer Federation President Alan Rothenberg said there was a possibility the start of major league soccer, the new American professional league he intends to start, would be delayed a year to 1996.

Rothenberg, coming off the successful World Cup, hoped to formally announce details on his league Tuesday, but the news conference was called off last week. Seven cities had been announced before the World Cup, but Rothenberg still hasn't announced the remaining five and stadia for some are in doubt.

"Obviously the later in the game it gets, the more you have to analyse whether to start in '95 or '96," Rothenberg said.

Asked whether that meant there might be a one-year postponement, Rothenberg said: "Sure it's a possibility; everything is a possibility."

Rothenberg also said U.S. coach Bora Milutinovic was on the verge of signing a four-year contract extension through December 1998. Rothenberg said only details of bonuses remained open and that he expected the deal would be completed within a week.



Jordan Soccer League first division championship leaders Al Wihdat team

9th week of Jordan soccer championship starts today

By Aileen Bannayan
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — With only three weeks left for the first leg of the 1st division soccer championship to be concluded, Al Wihdat enter the 9th week Thursday topping the standings with a mere two-point lead over second-placed Al Hussein.

Al Wihdat, who last won the first division title in 1991, are the only unbeaten team so far, although they have a low scoring record at 11-2.

They will next play Al Ahli who, despite their eighth place standing, are expected to enter the match with high spirits after their 1-0 win over third-placed Al Ramtha last week.

Al Ramtha, Al Faisali and Al Jazireh are now tied with 11 points in the standings but are in 3rd, 4th and 5th places respectively on goal difference.

Al Faisali might have the best chance at improving their record when they next meet lowly 11th-placed Al Jeel.

However, the match between Al Jazireh and Al Qadissieh will be most important, as both teams struggle for an advanced position this season.

Meanwhile, Al Ramtha will face Al Qadissieh who have disappointed their fans and are in 9th place after scoring only one win so far.

Last placed Al Karmel, who earned their first point after managing a 1-1 draw with Al Qadissieh in their last match, will face 10th placed Shabab Al Hussein, while Al Hussein might have a good chance to score a win when they face 6th-placed Al Arabi.

Kufroum's Yousef Obeidat is still the top scorer with 7 goals though he has not scored in the last three weeks. He is closely trailed by Al Arabi's Ayman Al Omani, Al Jazireh's Murad Hassan and Al Ramtha's Mouaffaq Abu Haidib with 6 goals each.

A total 150 goals have been scored in the past 48 matches with Al Hussein, Al Faisali, Kufroum and Al Ramtha scoring nearly half the number at 73.

Al Jeel and Al Karmel are the only two teams who have failed to score a win so far. They also have the worst scoring averages at 4-19 and 3-21.

Al Wihdat, who have reportedly landed a JD13,000

sponsorship deal with the Swatch company, have secured the Jordan Soccer Federation's highest profit from ticket sales.

The eighth week netted a total of JD13,000, the bulk of it coming from Al Wihdat-Hussein match which generated JD9,000. Al Qadissieh-Karmel match netted the least, at JD41,51.

According to an analysis by Al Rai Arabic daily, only 16 goals were scored in the past week and its average per match was relatively low at 2.6 compared to 22 goals in the seventh week.

That may be due in part to the cautious attitude of most teams not wanting to take any unnecessary risks that might greatly affect their standings with the final points being quite close.

Rough play was also a distinct characteristic. The eighth week saw three penalty kicks awarded — a high number compared to a total of only nine throughout the past seven weeks.

Similarly, three red-card bookings were issued this week, compared to a total of four since the beginning of the competition.

Papin says Solidarity is missing at Bayern

BONN (R) — French striker Jean-Pierre Papin, who has struggled at his new club Bayern Munich this season because of injury, criticised the German side Wednesday for having no solidarity in the dressing room.

"I have never experienced this before. In this club everybody talks about everybody else. There is no solidarity," Papin said in interview with the German newspaper, Bild.

"In France, you never talk badly about teammates. In Italy it is forbidden. You would have been thrown out in (AC) Milan for that. We are 20 players, four officials and two doctors. We have to stick together. But the respect for each other is not there."

Papin, who turns 31 next month, has come under fire from the German media for failing to score goals for the German defending champions.

But the French international had some harsh words for the way he has been handled by Bayern's Italian coach Giovanni Trapattoni during his period recovering from a knee injury.

"He took me to a game in Hassfurt. I told him that the doctor had told me to rest but he said: I am the doctor here. I'm the boss and you're playing," Papin said.

"So I played and after 30 minutes I was in pain again. That is stupid."



Jean-Pierre Papin

Scotland star joins Rangers

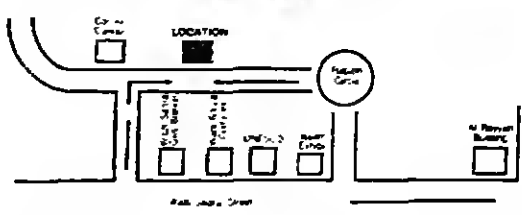
GLASGOW (AFP) — Scotland international Alan McLaren became Glasgow Rangers' latest expensive purchase here Tuesday in a combined cash and player package that sees Dave McPherson return to Hearts for a second spell.

Central defender McLaren completed his move from Hearts with Rangers defender McPherson returning to Tynecastle in a deal valued at two million pounds (about three million dollars).

McLaren will make his debut Sunday in Rangers' clash with Glasgow rivals Celtic, whose one million pound bid to sign him at the start of the season was rejected.

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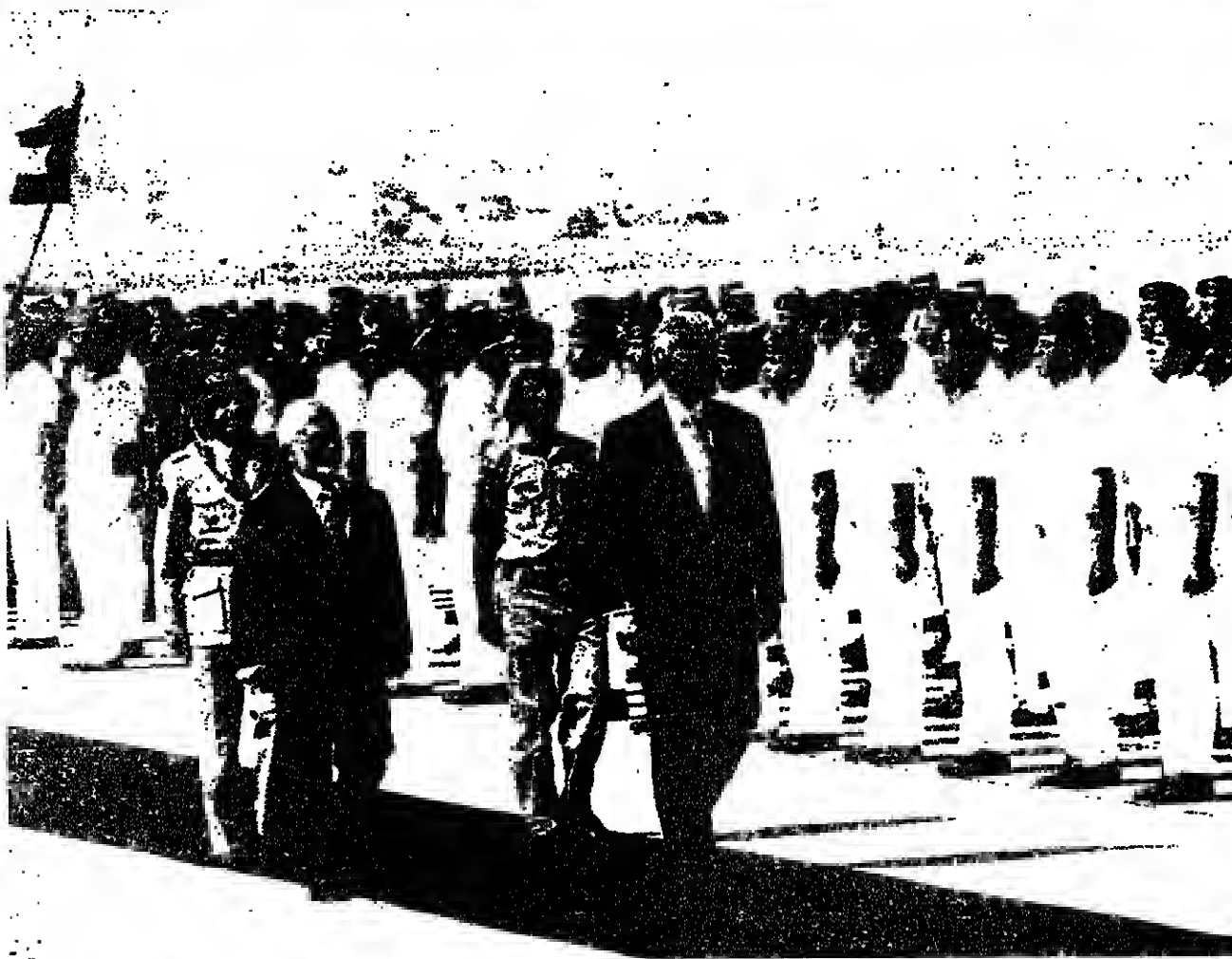
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U.S. President Bill Clinton, accompanied by His Majesty King Hussein, inspects a guard of honour mounted at Aqaba

airport upon his arrival there from Cairo early Wednesday (Photo by Yousef Allan)



His Majesty King Hussein, Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali and Israeli Premier Yitzhak Rabin point towards Israel while Israeli President Ezer Weizman looks on prior

to the Israeli-Jordanian peace accord signing ceremony (AFP photo)

Jordan will maintain strong ties with Arab, Islamic states

By Jonathan Wallace
and Sara Atiyeh

AMMAN (UPI) — Jordan intends to maintain strong ties to the Arab and Islamic world alongside its new peace with Israel, Crown Prince Hassan said Tuesday, on the eve of the signing of the Jordan-Israel peace treaty.

In an interview, the Crown Prince expressed hope that Jordan would become a "meeting ground for ideas" that would play a pivotal role in the future of the Middle East.

The Crown Prince said the ongoing process of forging peace in the region could help end Jordan's alienation from other Arab countries that began when Jordan refused to back a U.S.-led coalition that opposed Iraq in the 1991 Gulf war.

"There is no question in my mind of this country being dismembered in terms of its commitment to the Arab League or the Organisation of Islamic Conference," the Crown Prince said in the interview which took place in the gardens of his royal guest home in Amman.

The peace treaty, reached after negotiations in which Prince Hassan played a strong role, specifically outlines Jordan's ability to form military and security alliances with any Arab and Islamic country as long as they are not for the purpose of aggression against Israel.

While the Crown Prince acknowledged Jordan had been alienated from other Arab countries since the Gulf war, he said the peace process had not contributed to

those political distances.

"I don't think in any instance there is a total breakdown of communication," Prince Hassan said.

The Crown Prince voiced hope that Jordan could gain a pivotal role as a "meeting ground of ideas, of conflicting schools of convergence and divergence."

"Economically and socially, Jordan does have a middle-ground role to play as a pivot between the oil of the region and the northern hub of the Red Sea peninsula," Prince Hassan said. "I think we can, and are gradually becoming, the laboratory for new concepts."

As part of that role, Prince Hassan said Jordan would try to address the causes of extremism and violence.

"We have to be more effective in explaining the context of peace and in changing bias," the Crown Prince said. Much of the explaining must be done in Jordan, where hardliners in the Parliament boycotted an address by President Bill Clinton and demonstrators opposed to the treaty burned the U.S. and Israeli flags.

The Prince said he has asked political parties opposed to Jordan-Israel treaty to propose their own initiative as a basis for discussion. He has had no response, he said.

"We want to see greater participation in developing some form of national consensus over issues and I don't think it has ever been more in demand than in this period of political change," he said. "I am certainly ready to do it, but I think any dialogue re-

quires the participation of both sides."

Increasing tension between Jordan and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) results from a lack of funding for territories now under Palestinian rule in West Bank town of Jericho and the Gaza Strip, the Crown Prince said. "I would hope that the flow of international support will create a qualitative change and I think that will lessen some of the tension," he said.

He blamed the PLO for perpetuating its economic problems by failing to respond to Jordan's efforts to improve economic relations with the Palestinian self-rule areas.

The peace treaty could foster an ironic situation, Prince Hassan said, where "we end up responding to international initiatives more pragmatically than we respond to each other."

A November conference to be hosted by Prince Hassan on the humanitarian impact of the peace process could help Palestinian-Jordanian relations, he said.

"I hope that will be another contributive factor to greater understanding," he said.

The Crown Prince, who recently formed a Royal Commission for Modernisation and Development at King Hussein's request, said Jordanians of Palestinian origin would have a place in a revamped civil service where advancement would be based on merit.

"I will begin to dawn on us that it is only through achievement and hard work

that we are going to be able to preserve and promote our identity," he said.

An economic conference scheduled to open Sunday in Casablanca could help accelerate the pace of economic, social and cultural achievement in the region by helping to integrate the Middle East economy with the world economy, Prince Hassan said.

"I would like to see this region talking to the crossroads of the banking world as a region for the first time, not as a sub-region, but as an East Mediterranean-West Asian-Arabian region," the Crown Prince said.

A key step to regional cohesion came in peace with Israel, which allowed the two countries to set aside a half-century of dispute over territorial rights, water rights and sovereignty.

The Crown Prince named the three most important elements of "reciprocal recognition" in the treaty as "recognition of the right to self-defence, recognition of cultural rights and recognition of civil rights."

The pace of peace negotiations, begun three years ago in Madrid, quickened in recent months because Israel became "forthcoming in readiness to discuss substance," he said.

"For the past 18 months we have heard references to Syria first, and we kept saying the only condition for us is the merit of the case," Prince Hassan said. "And some four months ago, I think the pace began to increase."

World Bank: Jordan needs debt relief to enjoy peace

By P.V. Vivekanand
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The World Bank, on the eve of the signing of the Jordanian-Israeli peace treaty, has emphasised that Jordan needs substantial relief from its foreign debts in order to gain the economic benefits of peace in the region through increased private sector investments.

The World Bank, in a report released on Tuesday, said the Kingdom needed to increase private funds to raise its economic growth to six per cent, but it would find it difficult to invite investments unless the debt burden is reduced.

Jordan is expecting a growth of under 5.5 per cent in 1994.

According to earlier World Bank findings, Jordan needs to reduce its \$6.8 billion foreign debts by half to regain the international creditworthiness it enjoyed before its economy hit dire straits in 1988.

The \$3.4 billion figure would represent about 75 per cent of the gross domestic product of the Kingdom, a level that is internationally accepted as good credit rating.

"Jordan's current level of debt casts a cloud over its ability to attract sustained high level of private foreign investment," said Cao Koch-Weser, vice-president of the

World Bank's Middle East Department.

In its latest comments based on a recent study of the Jordanian economy, the World Bank suggested that about \$1.7 billion in debt relief would improve the Kingdom's situation.

According to the study, Jordan's prospects to gain debt relief were from individual countries, including the United States and Britain.

Washington is granting a write-off of \$705 million to Jordan from the Kingdom's debts to the U.S. of nearly \$1 billion. The first tranche of the write-off — \$220 million — was formalised in September for fiscal 1994. The rest of the write-off will come in the next two years.

Britain has cancelled Jordan's debts worth \$100 million. Several other European countries have converted loans of smaller amounts given to Jordan to grants.

Japan is Jordan's largest creditor, accounting for nearly 40 per cent of the Kingdom's all foreign debts. But debt relief is not available from Japan to any of its debtors. If Tokyo extends such relief it also means a total cut-off in all future Japanese financial assistance.

The Japanese government has adopted the same approach with Jordan, but it has assured the Kingdom that more Japanese funds will be

made available in the form of long-term soft loans — a prospect that many Jordanian officials believe is better for Jordan in the long term.

According to the World Bank, Jordan's best short-term economic prospects are in financial services, particularly in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

However, it warned, Jordanian commercial banks operating in the territories should proceed with caution in a system using three currencies, the Jordanian dinar, the Israeli shekel and the U.S. dollar.

An agreement reached between Jordan and the Palestine National Authority (PNA) in Gaza and Jericho early this month designates the dinar as the main legal tender in the territories, including dealings of the self-rule authority and taxation. The PNA has also agreed not to adopt any measure that could undermine the Jordanian dinar in the territories.

The PNA, led by the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), has said it was planning to issue its own currency. But international economic experts believe that it might not be a good idea at all for the Palestinians at this point in time since, as one European expert put it, "it does not make good economic sense."

Jordan has said that it had

conveyed to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) its concerns over the possibility of a surprise replacement of currency in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The World Bank report noted that Jordan's key geographic location could help it become the services centre for the area, with prospects in tourism, water resources and other infrastructure development.

However, it added that the Kingdom needed to further liberalise its economy and achieve more competitiveness to realise its economic objectives. The peace dividend will come "slower than many hope of fear" because of continued uncertainty in the region.

The World Bank report reflected the international institution's appraisal that Jordan is performing well in the economic restructuring programme the Kingdom has agreed with the IMF. The report was also seen as an endorsement of the Jordanian effort with its creditors to secure debt relief.

Finance Minister Sami Gammoh, who met with his counterparts from the Paris Club of creditor governments on the fringes of an IMF/World Bank meeting in Madrid last month, has reported a positive European attitude to Jordan's quest for debt relief.

Israelis, Jordanians take first steps

By Neil MacFarquhar
The Associated Press

WADI ARABA — Israelis and Jordanians took the first steps towards each other Wednesday, swapping baseball caps and war stories while their leaders sealed a historic peace treaty.

The one-hour ceremony on an asphalted mine field in the desert drew together 5,000 old enemies and strangers — army veterans in wheelchairs, parents of victims of extremism, Muslim sheikhs in long white robes and Jewish clergy in black coats.

"Hey, where did you fight?" an Israeli veteran yelled over to Lieutenant-General Mahmoud Salem, head of the Jordanian land forces. Gen. Salem said he did battle in the 1967 and 1973 Mideast wars.

"Look, where all the fighting has gotten us," the Israeli said. The two men smiled and shook hands.

Israeli women soldiers dispensing water from coolers and young Jordanian waiters traded baseball caps. The Israelis offered hats with the slogan "Blessed are the peacemakers" for caps imprinted with a crown and the "Royal Jordanian" airline logo.

Still, the first words did not

always come easy. "We tried to talk to the Israeli girls, but they don't speak Arabic," said waiter Rami Awad, 18, a Jordanian of Palestinian origin. "I'd like to invite them home to welcome them and make them tea."

In other joint ventures, Israeli and Jordanian soldiers took turns firing the 21-gm salute that opened the ceremony and the two countries' armed forces orchestras blended together for a rendition of the star-spangled banner.

Despite the easygoing harmony, security precautions were stringent because of threats from extremists to disrupt the peacemaking.

The asphalt patch was sealed off by barbed wire, and U.S. Secret Service agents atop watchtowers scanned the surrounding desert with binoculars. Before the festivities, the agents patrolled with bomb-sniffing dogs.

A Secret Service agent ordered the press away from one side of the bleachers because the dogs got agitated around a bank of soft drink coolers. The sound of a popping balloon made security forces jump.



Jordanian and Israeli armed forces officers exchange presents (Photo by Yousef Al Allan)

No breakthroughs, but Clinton hopes to narrow Syria-Israel gap

U.S. PRESIDENT Bill Clinton said Wednesday he hoped to narrow the gap between Israel and Syria when he holds talks with President Hafez Al Assad in Damascus but ruled out any dramatic breakthroughs.

"I expect that we will make some progress. I expect that we will narrow the gap," Mr. Clinton said ahead of Thursday's meeting.

"I do not expect this trip to Syria to produce a dramatic breakthrough in the immediate aftermath of the trip," he said before leaving Cairo for the signing of the peace treaty between Jordan and Israel.

Mr. Clinton will become the first U.S. president since Richard Nixon in 1974 to visit Damascus.

His discussions with Mr. Assad will focus on negotiations that are stalled mainly over the scope and timing of an Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights.

"I believe we have made a good deal of progress in the last few months," Mr. Clinton said in Cairo during a joint press conference with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

"I am being quite encouraged by that and it is on that basis in my conviction that both President Assad and Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and their two peoples

ought to continue the work for peace that I go to Syria."

In terms of the timing of a breakthrough, I don't want to commit myself to that because that really is up to the parties.

"They must determine themselves the substance and the timing but I believe we should move as quickly as possible and I am pushing it as quickly as possible. I cannot give you a date," he said.

But added that the peace process was clearly "moving in the right direction."

When asked about Washington keeping Syria on a list of countries which support "terrorism," Mr. Clinton replied: "Terrorism is still an issue between our two parties and it cannot be ignored."

"But the most successful way to end terrorism in this part of the world is to have comprehensive peace and Syria is a partner in the peace process," he said.

"I believe President Assad wants a comprehensive peace and wants an end to terrorism and therefore I think it would be a mistake for me not to take this opportunity to go to Syria, to try to further the peace process," he said.

Mr. Mubarak said Mr. Assad is "wholeheartedly committed to a just and honourable peace" as was the

Lebanese leadership.

Syria's government-run newspapers Wednesday held back their usual editorial assault on the Jordan-Israel peace treaty and played up President Clinton's trip to the region.

Every major daily led its front page with previews of the signing of the treaty later in the day, with multiple headlines quoting Jordanian and Israeli leaders' peace slogans.

"Clinton's visit will ensure a precious opportunity for him to be acquainted with Syria's desire to achieve peace and its keenness about an effective American role that could rid the region of the danger of wars and tension," the Tishrin daily said.

There have been few outward signs of progress on the Syrian-Israeli front since direct talks were suspended last February.

The two sides disagree over Syria's demand for a complete withdrawal from the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights and Israel's demand for a full normalisation of ties.

But U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, who is mediating between the two sides, has said that although serious gaps remain, some differences are being narrowed.

Mr. Christopher, who is accompanying Mr. Clinton, Monday strongly hinted Mr. Assad must now decide whether he wants peace with Israel.

But the newspapers blamed the stalemate on Israel.

"Any progress on the Syrian track is contingent on the (American) capability to bridge the Israeli gaps and to remove obstacles placed by Israel before any settlement," Tishrin said.

But Al Baath, the mouthpiece of the ruling Baath Party, said progress is possible.

"Overcoming gaps is not an unattainable matter," the newspaper said.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Assad are to hold a joint press conference Thursday after their talks in Damascus.

The conference at the presidential palace here will be broadcast live on Syrian Television.

Mr. Clinton, who is the first U.S. president to visit Syria since Richard Nixon went there in 1974, is to arrive Thursday morning for a visit of four to six hours before travelling on to Israel.

Mr. Clinton and Mr. Assad met in January in Geneva for a meeting aimed at finding a way to unblock Syrian-Israeli negotiations.